

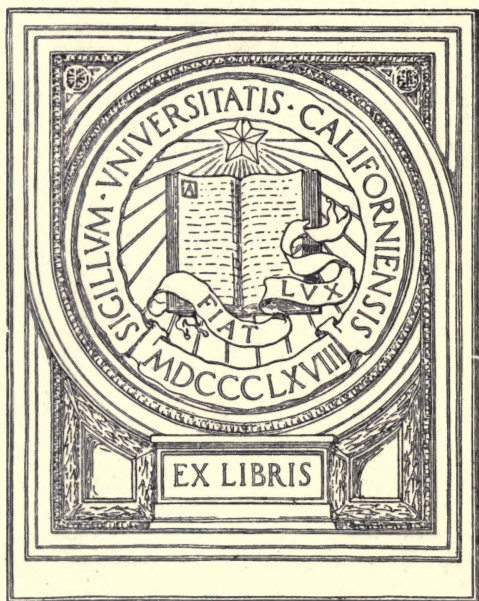
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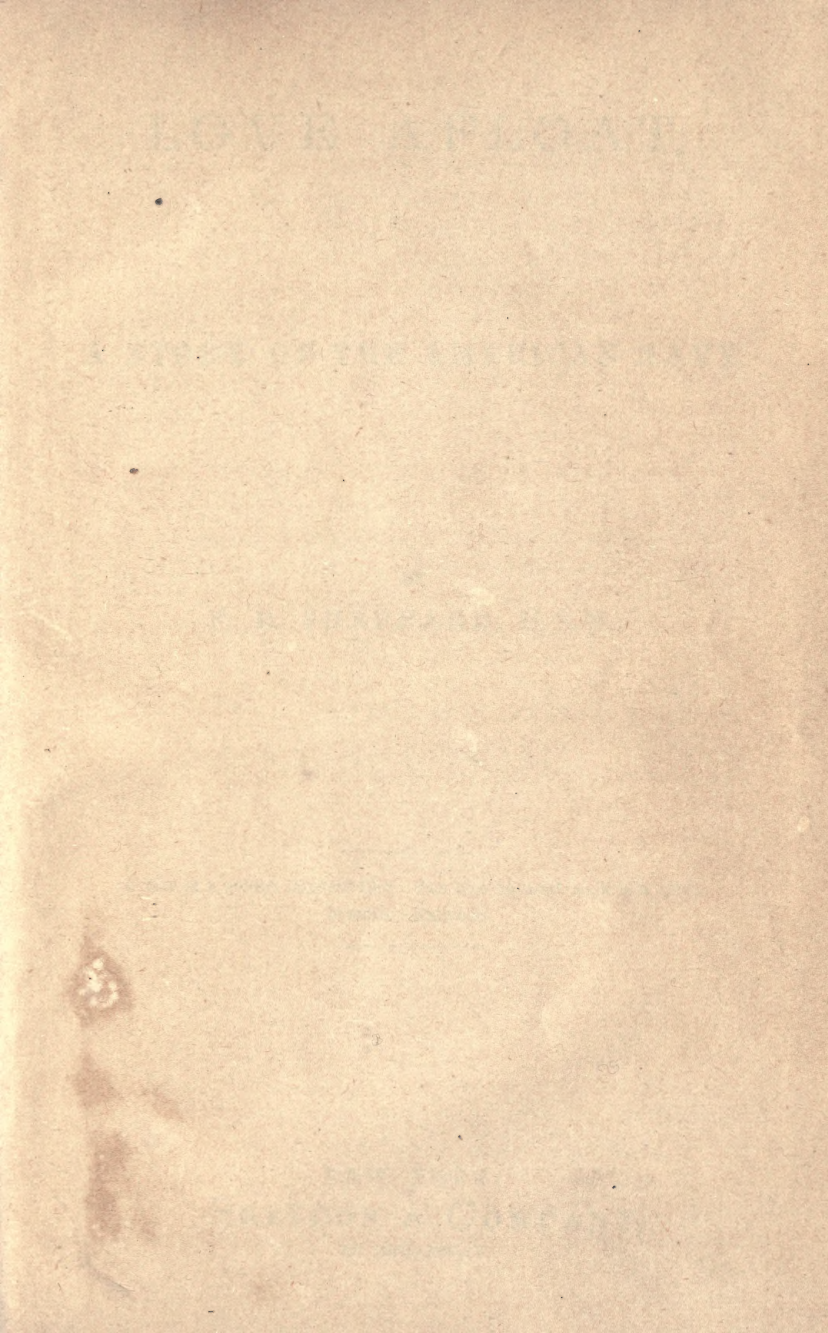
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F. H. SHEPPARD U. S. N.

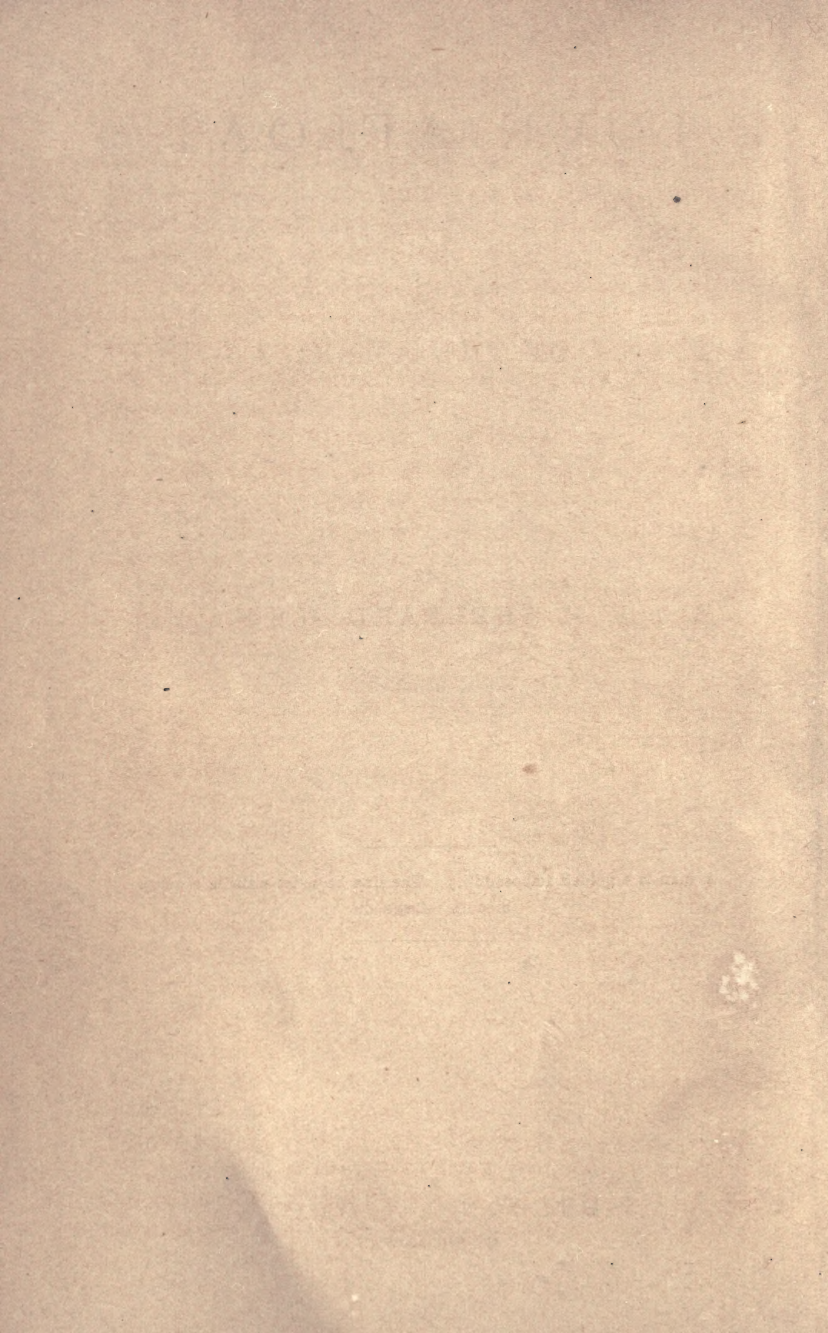


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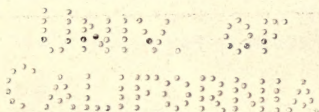
LOVE AFLOAT.

A STORY OF THE AMERICAN NAVY.

BY

F. H. SHEPPARD, U. S. N.

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A man is a golden impossibility. The line he must walk is a hair's breadth.—EMERSON.

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TO THE AUTHOR'S WISE COUNSELLOR, HIS FAITHFUL FRIEND, AND

HIS MODEL OF COURTESY AND HONOR—TO

REAR-ADMIRAL C. R. P. RODGERS, UNITED STATES NAVY,

THIS STORY IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY

INSCRIBED.

M11984

TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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LOVE AFLOAT.

A STORY OF THE AMERICAN NAVY.

CHAPTER I.

THE period of time at which occurred the events now to be described, was during the years when piracy had been carried so far that the United States government was obliged to keep a considerable naval force constantly cruising among the islands of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean sea. Our commerce in those waters had become so feeble, and the lives of our sea-faring citizens were exposed to so much danger, that the country undertook an expensive and tedious task of years in order to restore strength to the one and give to the other that security which is the birthright of America's children.

The work to be performed was the repression of piracy; and the government could use only its naval arm in the undertaking. The law of nations forbade the employment of the other. This fact, joined to the languor of the higher Spanish authorities, the collusions of Spanish officials, and the sympathy of Spanish people, made the work proceed but slowly; yet from the beginning the end was apparent. That thorough-going practical officer, Commodore David Porter of Essex fame, acted as controlling and directing mind; and the country felt that it was well served. Unceasing vigilance, long watchful convoys, and frequent dashing expeditions, which sometimes reached

the shore in defiance alike of the pirates attacked and the law behind which they sought refuge, were the order of the day in the efficient squadron of small craft on the station. Beside the customary demands of duty and the great stimulus of an unequalled *esprit de corps*, each felt that a master's eye was watching him. Officers and men strove to do faithful work, sure of the reward of approbation.

This was our navy's Seminole war. It is a pity that such valuable services should be entirely forgotten in the present day.

The time is on a winter day in 1823, at sunset ; the place, the Brooklyn Navy Yard, on board the old receiving ship *Virginia*, in a state-room whose open door shows into the more spacious ward-room.

The ward-room is deserted, except by two black boys, who are spreading a table for supper. A large stove in the centre warms the apartment and the surrounding rooms. The lowness of the huge white beams overhead gives the usual between-decks sense of confinement, and in the open state-room the space is still more limited. The swords and pistols, the uniform suits hanging on the bulkhead, the pictures, and the professional books on the shelves, show that it is an officer's room ; while the choice and arrangement of these things indicate that the occupant is a man of taste and refinement. He stands before you, Lieutenant Henry Hartley, at your service, showing to advantage even though engaged in tying the heavy cravat of the period.

Hartley is a New Yorker of wealthy family, a good-looking fellow, with aquiline features, olive complexion, dark curly brown hair, and clear brown eyes. His movements are quick, without being flurried. He advances steadily toward the end at which he is now aiming—to be attired in full dress for the ball he means to attend this evening. He is of medium height and build, apparently twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old, and alto-

gether a pleasant-looking young man. Before long his voice confirms a previous impression, and shows that he is not alone.

"Where do you think I found my gloves, Garnet?" he asks.

"Chatham Street," replies a dry voice, which we discover to come from a man sitting comfortably in a chair tipped back against the end of the bureau, which partly screens him from observation. He has been gazing quietly out of the port, at the river gilded by the setting sun, and watching the silver cakes of ice float past with the ebb-tide. He is complacently and slowly smoking a long-stemmed pipe, the bowl of which is a very suggestive carving in wood of the head of the devil. In spite of his apparent lack of interest, the officer addressed as Garnet turns his head as though expecting some explanation. His face at once makes on us the impression that he is a character. There is in it a singular mixture of expressions. Honesty, reserve, humor, and ugliness are apparent, especially the two last. We feel that of Hartley's disposition we shall rapidly learn more, and that his intimacy is obtainable; but that in the first glance we have found out as much of the other as we are likely to discover in a long time. However, we have a prepossession in his favor as he turns toward his friend.

Hartley answers the action rather than the words. "Why, that rascal George had them all. The master-at-arms found them in his bag, each pair wrapped in a bit of dungaree, and all stowed in a trousers' leg. I'd been missing them for a month. The fellow got leave to go ashore to a dance to-night, and when they searched him there was a black pair in his pocket."

"Right shade," replies the other.

Hartley has finished his toilet by this time, and, throwing on a loose coat, sits down by his friend. The two gaze quietly out upon the river, the only sounds intruding upon their silence being the distant hum of the men's voices, the

faint footfalls of the watch officer two decks above, and the nearer noise of Garnet's slow puffing at his pipe. In a few minutes, however, their current of musing is interrupted: the unusual sight of a vessel moving down the river among the ice-cakes attracts their attention. Hartley throws open the port sash, and both lean out into the nipping evening air, to observe her well. The vessel is running a great and seemingly needless risk by coming out with the river full of heavy ice, and this fact alone would make her movements noticeable; but her beauty of form, and the skill with which she is handled, much increase the interest of our two friends. She is a top-sail schooner, somewhat like the Baltimore clippers of the time in looks, but her rail is lower and her sheer much less. She carries two boats inboard in the waist. Her immensely long spars are painted white and black like those of a man-of-war. She appears to be of about one hundred tons burden; but as she heels over to a puff of wind, she shows a breadth of beam which makes it evident that the first judgment of her size was far too small. She is under top-sail, jib, and main-sail, all new sails. Everything about her evinces to a seaman that there has been great care and thoroughness exercised in her equipment, and that by some person of knowledge and ability. The elements of speed and strength seem to have been equally regarded, and more regarded than appearance, yet the vessel is wonderfully graceful. Hartley and Garnet watch her and her movements, so lively and precise, with the intense interest true sailors always feel in any new matter pertaining to their profession.

The little schooner moves with a celerity and care which are life-like. Now she darts close-hauled through an opening between two masses of ice into a space of clear water; now, putting her helm down, flies round in stays, and runs into a lane which promises to lead a good way down the stream. Finding only a *cul-de-sac*, her top-sail is backed, her way stopped, and she drifts down with the

current. Now she wears round on her heel, fills the top-sail, and with sheets eased off, glides back toward the Virginia. Up to this time she has been above that vessel, and the lazy ebb has helped her progress very little; but she apparently sees the strip of clear water extending along the Brooklyn shore, and she comes swiftly over toward it, luffing to weather a cake of ice, or keeping away to pass one, and curvetting and dancing like a fairy craft.

The interest of the two watchers is manifest. Their eyes never leave the approaching vessel. Hartley's enthusiasm is aroused plainly; for he utters an occasional exclamation at some neatly executed manœuvre or at the stylish appearance of the schooner. Garnet says nothing, but his extinguished pipe bears witness to his thoughts.

The schooner continues to approach until within fifty yards of the Virginia; when, having gained the open water, her helm is put up and she swings around, showing her broadside.

"Do you know her, Hal?" asks Garnet.

"Never saw her in my life before."

"Yes, you have."

"Why," asked Hartley, surprised, "is that the big centre-board boat we saw on the stocks in Harvey's yard?"

"Yes."

"She doesn't look half as large now."

Hartley referred to a visit they had made, a month previous, to the ship-yard of Harvey, a New York builder whose models were then famed for speed. They had both been much interested by the elegance and proportion of the vessel now before them. A point which had made particular impression was her exceedingly light draft. She had a centre-board (a fitting unusual at that time, though common to us), and her small depth of hold was obtained by this means in addition to great breadth of beam. Hartley had been so pleased by the model that he asked information as to her ownership and future business; but

no one in the yard could tell him more than that Harvey said she was a pleasure-boat and was well paid for.

As she passed by the open port a circumstance happened on her deck which created some surprise in the minds of the lookers-on. Her men in sight were seven in number. The person apparently sailing the schooner was a gigantic, powerfully-built man, with a shock of fiery red hair and a very florid face. Beside the man at the wheel, there were four seamen, one of whom was a young negro. The seventh person seemed from his dress and behavior to be a passenger. He stood by the taffrail apart from the officer, and his attention was as much engaged by outside objects as by what was going on at hand in the schooner. He gazed at the Virginia as they passed, his features being distinctly visible from their nearness. He was a thick-set, short-necked man, with broad shoulders and a sturdy appearance. He was dressed in a new suit of black broadcloth, which fitted rather baggily, but beyond the fact that his face was, if possible, even redder than that of the giant sailing the vessel, there was nothing remarkable about him. All these details were distinctly seen as the schooner swept by, then within thirty yards of the port. She had barely passed, when the young negro, in attempting to obey an order, let go the peak halliards. The peak came down by the run, and the apparent passenger, thundering out an oath, seized a rope's end, and with violence of manner and coarseness of language much in contrast with his previous demeanor and respectable dress, laid it without mercy over the head and shoulders of the yelling negro. The giant rushed up hastily and placed his hand on the arm of the striker. He turned angrily at the interruption, and the negro, seizing the opportunity, ran forward and dived down the fore hatch. The giant spoke a few words in a low voice to the passenger, who bawled back, "What in hell do I care?" He quickly moderated his passion, however, and dropping the rope's end walked off to his old station by the taffrail.

This little episode made Hartley look disgusted, and Garnet thoughtful. The latter, after the schooner had passed out of sight around the southern point of the bay, and the window had been closed against the eager outside air, remarked, "That passenger chap was the captain, Hal."

"He was a brute, anyhow," replied the other.

"Yes, a clotted brute; but there's nothing surprising—queer."

"What are you thinking about?"

"Queer craft and queer party. They were all armed. The captain had a pistol under his 'long-shore togs."

"Light your pipe, Will. This is the first mare's egg you've found since you caught Paddy Rourke playing ghost on the orlop deck."

Garnet chuckled at some remembrance, lighted the pipe, and said no more on the subject.

Lieutenants William Pinckney Garnet and Henry Hartley are—I had nearly said warm friends—but *close friends* describes them better. Garnet is the senior in years, though Hartley has the advantage of a few numbers on the register. They entered the service nearly together: Garnet, a strong ugly lad from Virginia, entirely the opposite in his roughness and silence of the conventional, chivalrous, Southern youth; and Hartley, a delicate, spirited little fellow, with so much of high thought, purity, ability, uncompromising devotion to his young ideals of right, and, it must be added, of irritability, that he had no earthly chance for popularity in a midshipmen's mess. Garnet's lack of polish made him a butt at once; but he took all jokes in such a quiet way, seemed to understand and appreciate his messmates so well, showed such a superiority over trifles and capacity for taking things at their just weight—in short, evinced so much *savoir faire*, which even boys practically recognize, that in two weeks he was at the head of the mess, and no one was jealous. Yet he had no intimate friend for a long time, and then only one.

Hartley was at first let alone on account of his small

size, but he, also, was soon found out. His temper and determination not to be imposed on drew upon him the attention of the bullying set—there was more than one bully in a mess of twenty midshipmen—and his strictness of conduct, his high standard of right and attempts to publicly maintain it, with some detected lapses into poetry, all made him an object of persecution among the others. The bullies discovered in due course of time that he was always ready to do his best with his fists, and they became not overfond of attacking the little fellow who was so quick to hit back and so hard to keep whipped. They learned to let him alone. In this they were assisted by Garnet, who came into the steerage one day to find them “passing him round.” This operation consists in forming a circle about one person, and pushing him violently and continually from one to another as if he were a bolster. It is not particularly painful but wearisome, and very exasperating. Hartley, unable to strike a blow or help himself in the least, seemed about to expire with wrath. Garnet promptly interfered. “STOP THIS! Sit down, Hartley! If I find any of you fellows troubling him again, I’ll report you to the First Lieutenant, and you’ll be quarantined in Rio.” The threat was very effectual. When the discreet crowd had left the steerage, and Hartley’s feelings had overcome him in nervous tears, of which he was so much ashamed that he begged Garnet to excuse him, the cheering word was, “All right, youngster. Nothing to be ashamed of. Wait till you get fat.” Hartley always afterward dated back the commencement of his friendship for Garnet to that speech.

Hartley was devoted to his unexpected friend after this, feeling a constant desire to serve him and do him honor; and Garnet, pleased by things in the other which were commonly disregarded or laughed at, the recognition of which proved a certain nobility in his own character, returned a great kindness. He watched over the little fellow as if he were a trust. He gave him many a quiet hint, eagerly caught up; taught him, unconsciously almost to the teacher,

and as a consequence of the teacher's bent of mind, to look less within himself, observing rather the characteristics of others; and made him, though sometimes very unwilling, pay attention to the details of his profession till gradually an interest was acquired. The youngster then, turning his good mind in the right direction, soon learned as much as his teacher knew, and got a reputation among his superior officers as a quick and promising midshipman. At the same time he was gaining happiness in another way. He was finding out how to conduct himself toward equals, and was becoming tolerated and liked. His old-time bullies came to respect him.

Garnet's life had been sorrowful. He went to sea at what was then the very late age of seventeen. His family was a good one; but loss of property and the early death of his father had left him without means of education or cultivation. His mother's poverty acted doubly, keeping him out of company and out of school. He seemed to feel his position, and lost no chance of making or saving money, so as to benefit her. When he was sixteen she died, and the sad boy was taken into the house of a great-uncle whom he had never seen. This relative had wealth, influence, and a pretty daughter of winsome disposition who was about a year older than her cousin. The great-uncle sent Will to a day-school, where he applied himself steadily to make up for lost time; and the daughter gave her cousin the only sympathy he had yet received. It was not surprising that he slipped into love with his sweet consoler. He did so, without knowing what the new emotion was. His devotion to "Cousin Susan" became intense and plain to all; and she seemed to her friends to be truly touched herself, contrary to the rule in these cases. The uncle finally became alarmed, and to get rid of the troublesome nephew, procured him a midshipman's warrant, and had him ordered to sea in the first ship fitting out. Before he left the house he was informed that a glorious career had been opened to him, and that it would be black

ingratitude for him to write to Susan. He promised proudly, and quietly: "I won't write to Cousin Susan if you don't want me to." He did not even try to bid her good-by apart, but went to sea resolved to become somebody and return for her. Before his return she had married and gone to another part of the State to live. He never saw her again.

All of this history was revealed to Hartley one night, in a first watch in the harbor of Genoa, after the two had been messmates several years. Garnet stopped in his walk and looked above his head at the brilliant sky.

"Look at Lyra," he said.

"Yes—what of it?" replied Hartley.

"You see the bright star at the angle?"

"Yes."

"I had a notion, when I was a little bit of a chap in old Virginny, that when I grew up I'd have two wives."

"What! at once?"

"Yes, at once. I thought the bright star was I, and the others my two wives. When I got older I knew a girl—well, I thought for awhile she was the bright star herself. I used to laugh at my early ideas then. By and by I got to hoping my sweetheart would take me into heaven alongside of her, and I fancied the two lower stars would represent us very well and that Alpha hadn't anything to do with it. And now, my boy—I think so now. I am Alpha myself, that bright particular star, alone in his glory."

While Hartley was astonished at such an unheard-of poetical crank from his friend, he felt that it must have been evoked by some strong memory; and a little encouragement sufficed to draw from Garnet the story we have told. The confidence deepened their friendship.

The effect of the passing years was different upon the men. Hartley had gained in all respects. His fine mind had grown, reaching out tenacious filaments, seizing and drawing in food from men and books. He had a reputation

throughout the service for ability as an officer; and his courage was undoubted. In accordance with the custom of the day he had accepted several challenges to fight duels; but always naming pistols as the weapons, and always firing in the air, he had come to be considered a person privileged, and not to be challenged. His conversation was agreeable and his manner graceful, though too nervous to be called perfect. He had learned the French and Spanish languages, beside keeping up the Latin of his boyhood, and on subjects of general interest he was well informed. In dress he was particular to a fault.

Perhaps as good a test of his usefulness as any other was the manner in which his subordinates spoke of him and obeyed his commands. The old salts would say, "Mr. Hartley knows what he's about. He's strict, but he ain't got no favorites;" and the younger seamen, "I want to be in Mr. Hartley's watch on deck reefing with the watch. He knows how to lay a yard with the sail liftin' to your hand." Or they would declare with enthusiasm, "It was pretty to see him shorten sail to a squall."

He was a restless, useful young man, anxious to learn, interested in anything which might appear, full of high principle, always ready to go out of himself in sympathy, having many so-called friends, and with an influence extending in every direction. He was growing. Already the tree was tall enough for a landmark, and it yearly increased in height, in symmetry, and in the spread of its far-reaching branches.

Yet in this fine character there was a defect. Hartley was not very persevering, and had not enough fortitude. In reverses he became too despondent and hopeless; in long continuance of monotonous duties he grew disgusted and weary. If he usually persisted in spite of his dislikes, it was more through personal pride than just principle; for he lacked stability.

Garnet was different. He seemed to have gradually become careless. None could be more attentive to duty

than he, and no one had ever known him guilty of any ungentlemanly speech or act; but he seemed to have no care for influence over others, and to have lost much of his former power. Not that others failed in outward respect toward him, but he did not seem to be thought of. When he entered a mess he speedily became a fixed fact. He had a great power of hiding what he knew, and though he was continually gaining fresh knowledge, but few remarked it. His dress was generally somewhat slouchy.

Still, in spite of outer appearances, he was much more of a man than common, a fact occasionally discovered by some associate possessed of penetration. He governed himself well; he was not easily moved by any low influence of flattery, or of urgency, or of importunity, or by the power of others' will. His actions came mostly from wise reflection, on which he mainly depended; and from himself—that good part of himself, his own mind—he could not be easily enticed or forced away. He never made trouble, because he neither sought the secrets of others nor talked of them when they came into his possession. He had a fine control over his tongue. His leading ideas for life were something like this: Faithfulness in duty will be sure to give me all the credit I deserve. I will keep my mouth shut and save making trouble for everybody in range. I don't care much what other men think, as long as I have had a chance to think for myself and am acting up to my own ideas of right. There is nobody doesn't need helping along and holding back at the same time. I must try to think how other men feel, and to remember that hardly anybody has had a fair chance.

The men, recognizing his coolness and ability in trying situations, as well as his regard for duty at all times, had begun to nickname him "Old Steady." Yet he was only thirty-two.

He was like a tree, too, but some not very showy or very large tree, more useful than beautiful, and having roots entirely disproportioned to the small display made

above the ground. There was his great defect. His good qualities were not sufficiently positive. There was not enough outcome for what went into him.

As a man digging into the earth finds a slender rootlet and says confidently, "This belongs to that little tree away off yonder," so the mentally penetrative could discover that Garnet drew food from the richest of soils without regard to distance, and that he took in a great deal of the best. Yet instead of the ripe fruit of wise independent action, he bore only the flower of quiet gentlemanhood. All this showed a long-continued selfishness, which had become a part of his life, though he never saw it in the strong light of full conviction.

Hartley had personal ambition, which, joined to his other qualities, insured his continual rising; but of ambition, within and for himself, Garnet had none. He needed some brightening, spurring, conscience-inspiring motive, beyond any motive he already had, to redeem and vivify his life.

By a singular good fortune these two men, who had come to know and love each other, had always sailed together. With a few exceptions of brief periods, they had passed in each other's company all of their life, from boyhood into settled manhood. Their mutual regard and inseparability had passed into proverbial expressions. Sometimes by way of example things were said to be joined as fast as Hartley and Garnet, or something else was as close as their friendship. They were spoken of together indifferently as "the twins," or "the mates," or "the partners," or "the old firm."

Some time after the schooner had passed they fell into a conversation.

"Where are you going to-night, Hal?" asked Garnet.

"To the ball at Mrs. Van Meter's."

"You'll find that woman yet."

"What woman?"

"The one you've been looking for these five years."

"I haven't been aware of the search."

"No, I don't suppose you have. How about that Spanish girl at the Havana? You met her at a ball, by the way."

"Pshaw, Will, you know that was only a bit of softness."

"Soft as a sour sops, and like one otherwise."

"As how, William?"

"Green. How about Miss Lansquenet at Gibraltar?"

With a little hesitation: "You must allow she was a lovely woman."

"I am not so qualified to speak of that as you. I never saw her but—"

"Just one time and at a distance then—ha! ha! Saw a lady coming off in the gig in your watch on deck—through the glass, ha! ha! and got a relief and dodged into your room till she was gone, ha! ha!"

"Well," replied G. in a summing up tone, "She *was* good-looking, and you didn't go ashore to the colonel's house, and the balls, and the rides for nothing. You would have found her that time if we hadn't been sent over to Tripoli just in season to save you."

"You must allow she was a lovely woman, Will."

"To *look at*, she was"—Hartley put in a smile, remembering Garnet's one look—"but you didn't know her. For a month afterward you were as full as the mizzen top-sail with the wind aft."

"Well, well, that's all past and gone, and I'm glad of it. Those were my youthful follies."

"A part of them. And you're ready and primed to go off into manly ones as the chance offers."

"Good Lord, Will, I believe you'd have me keep away from ladies' company altogether!"

"Why not? Look at me. How else are you going to keep out of harm's way?"

"You're as absurd as usual. You think because I enjoy a dance and like to talk nonsense to a bright girl, and take pleasure in shore society that I am continually hunting a wife. And you give me credit for no higher motive than

a natural instinct. My dear fellow, you are much mistaken, and to prove it—”

“You are mistaken, Hal. I think you are a marrying man, and that you will be happier married. But I believe you are apt to take a pretty face for full proof of goodness. I’m afraid after we are parted I shall see you dissatisfied, and feel that I have been deprived of your company, and you’ve got a poor bargain.”

“Will,” replied Hartley, with some feeling, “I beg your pardon; I was wrong. But you needn’t borrow trouble, for I assure you I haven’t a thought of marrying. If ever I do ask a woman to have me, it will be one that’s too good for me.”

“How were you going to prove it a minute ago?”

“To prove it? Oh, yes: I was going to say that I am tired of this yard duty, and to ask what you think of applying for orders to the Fish.”

“I’m with you. Gulf, isn’t she?”

“Yes.”

“Maybe we’ll have a little fighting.”

“Tunis was the last, and that wasn’t much after the other. It seems hardly a year ago since we were in the Old Ironsides’ steerage together. ‘I Jove, Will, some of those engagements won’t go off our bragging-list soon.’”

“You’re right.”

“The Cyane and Levant, and the way old Stewart got us out of Porto Praya that morning, were the best.”

“Porter’s the right man in the right place.”

They sat awhile longer, silent. It had grown dark, but a young moon shone with yellow glancing rays on the black river, occasionally making visible in a pale and ghostly manner the few remaining cakes of ice which the tide carried across the path of light. Garnet’s pipe had long been out. The lamps were brought into the ward-room, a cheerful sound of poking the fire, and rattling crockery was heard, and by and by a black boy appeared at the door saying, “Supper ready, sah.”

"Well, Hal, shall we apply to-morrow?"

"Yes, I'm willing."

The other members of the mess now collecting around the supper table, the two arose and went to their seats. The meal was soon over. Garnet refilled his pipe, and set the devil on fire, while Hartley put on a dress coat.

"Are you going over in the barge?" he asked, as Hartley emerged, fully prepared.

"Yes; the captain was so good as to invite me."

"Good-night to you." And he added, in a lower tone, "Look out you don't meet her to-night."

CHAPTER II.

WE must imagine Hartley's pull across the river with the stiff captain for company, the landing, the walk up town, and his arrival at the house of the Van Meters, which was to be the scene of the evening's festivities. His acquaintance with the family was of old date, and he was received by the hostess, a lady of unmeasured abilities as a talker, with a familiarity which bore witness to that fact as well as to the esteem in which he was held. "Oh, Harry," exclaimed the robust matron, advancing with extended hand and giving him no time for the usual courtesies, "I'm so glad to see you, and so soon. I was afraid you would be late."

"Thank you, madam; I am proud to hear you say so—but perhaps it is not entirely on my account."

"Oh, you vain fellow! to *think* of such a thing at *all*. Certainly it wasn't on your account."

"How can you be so cruel? To awaken my pride and then—what is the reason you wished me to come early? I see I am among the first arrivals."

"Now do be still, Harry, if you can, and let me tell you.

I'm sure I'm anxious enough to do it, for somebody may come in at any moment, and I couldn't tell you then at all. If you only would give me a chance to say what I wish—but you always would talk to the exclusion of every one else—”

“At your service, madam. I'm as still as the grave.”

“H'ssh!” with reproving finger; “there you go off again, sir. What did I say? I do wonder how you get along, Harry Hartley, at church on the ship, or whatever service you heathens substitute for the regular service, and you ought to be ashamed to do so, or some of those dreadful ceremonies when all must be so still, and the commander looks at all the sailors and the cannon to see if all are ready for service. Oh, Harry, it's a dreadful trade you follow, devoting all your time and talents to kill poor inoffensive people you never saw before and that never did you any harm. I want you to tell her all about that beautiful moonlight battle with the two ships, when so many were killed and the Old Ironsides escaped from them so gloriously, in spite of all they both could do.”

Hartley found a single blank instant wherein to enter the point of a question, and knowing Mrs. Van Meter well, he was quick. “Her? Tell who? Why did you wish to see me early, Mrs. Van Meter?”

“I'm sure you need'nt speak to me in that way. I *am* telling you, and you ought not to be in such a hurry. It is Miss Dewhurst—Mary Dewhurst you've heard me speak about so often at your mother's. I want you to be attentive to her, for she has been in mourning for her two aunts and her grandmother for two years. You know Mrs. Terrell died just as she came into society—you need'nt pretend to be surprised, sir; you *know* I mean Mary—just as she came into society two years ago, eighteen years old, and she has been so quiet and retired ever since. Old Mrs. Tildmondley, her other aunt, you know, she died about six months afterward, and then her grandmother. It seemed so provoking and really too bad for such a nice girl to lose her two best years. But she told me—you know I'm a distant connection of Mr.

Dewhurst's, and Mary quite regards me as an aunt—and she told me she could'nt think of going out into gay company and leaving her mother feeling badly at home. I don't know really that she has lost anything, for she is *lovely* now, and I don't think girls ought to marry quite so young—mere children, in fact, many of them—and there's that rich Mr. Ropbles shows what he wants plainly enough, but she won't look at him, for he's fifty if he's a day, and young Martin, too, he is very well off, and quite in our set, and has known her intimately all his life; they were near neighbors for ever so long—for years, and he is devoted to her, and I think she had better have him, for my part."

Hartley showed his courtesy by his patience, but was beginning to fear that the lady would fatigue herself early in the evening. A new arrival calling away the hostess, gave him a respite, and passing on he accosted some acquaintances and engaged in talk with them. It was but a little while till Mrs. Van Meter was back. Calling him aside she told him in her discursive style what she desired. This was for Hartley to come with her to make Miss Dewhurst's acquaintance, and afterward to be attentive to her and dance with her. She added: "There's Miss Isabel Terrell, Mary's cousin, an orphan girl and quite poor, you know, for Mrs. Terrell had nothing to leave her. She and Mary are very close friends, and really I can't understand it, for though I acknowledge she is fine-looking, she is so cold and distant and reserved, I can't see how Mary can like her. So dissimilar in every respect, you know—but Mary dotes on her, and Mr. Dewhurst insisted on Isabel making his house her home and looking on him as her father. I wish you would just take her down to supper, for Mr. Dewhurst is here and he will be pleased to have some attention paid to Isabel. She is his sister's child, you know."

By this time they had reached the end of the spacious parlors where a group sat around an open fire, in a conversation which appeared to be more genuinely social than

was often heard at a ball and which, but for the rich dress of the women and the solemn black of the men might, from its ease and gentle gayety have been thought domestic.

Mrs. Van Meter introduced him. "Mr. Dewhurst, this is Mr. Hartley, one of our naval officers, and a very old friend of our family."

"Mrs. Dewhurst, Mr. Hartley," said the gentleman. Hartley bowed and was then presented to the young ladies. Made curious by the long prologue of Mrs. Van Meter, he looked at each, and he saw such a pair of young women that he lost his easy indifference at once. Isabel was a magnificent looking girl, tall and of full proportions, with dark rippling hair, a clear dark complexion, and fine brown eyes with a far-away expression. He was introduced to her, first, and her clear low-toned voice sounded as her eyes looked. It was not cold, but cool; not unmindful of the stranger, but made him feel that she was one who thought, and that her thoughts would naturally be not of him but of things remote. "A young Medea," was Hartley's fancy.

But if Isabel made him think of Medea, Mary should have brought Helen to his mind. He gazed for a moment on her beauty, forgetful, and then bowed low in pure unthinking homage. It was a bow that expressed the true sentiment of that gesture—"I cast myself at your feet."

I cannot give an adequate idea of the charm of Mary Dewhurst's face at the age of twenty. I cannot express it, for in it was an inexplicable something which, to put in words, would be like painting the moving sheen of the sea. Her face was lovely with changing expression and delicacy of color and outline, rather than with classical features. Her eyes were truly blue, rich and dark. They seemed to Hartley for an instant to look through him, with calm power. If a face could be believed, this girl was good. She seemed good, and sweet, and gentle; and Hartley thought her glancing down before his direct regard was a pleasant unaffected modesty. He saw her bright brown

hair lying low on her smooth broad forehead, her pretty pink ear, her well-shaped mouth, and her long dark lashes; and it was no wonder that he bowed low. He was, as Garnet had intimated, very susceptible; and Mary was the unconscious flower of all temptation and attractive mystery.

Mr. Dewhurst's voice recalled him. "Draw up that easy chair behind you, Mr. Hartley, and join us. I have a partiality for the members of your profession, sir. You will find it very comfortable here. This genial fire is the best part of the ball to us old folks."

"Father puts his strong reason first, Mr. Hartley," said Mary with a smile.

Hartley thought she was even lovelier with the smile on her face than she had looked before. He smiled back spontaneously.

"I believe," she went on, "he likes the navy from a sort of mercenary gratitude."

"And for the same reason," her mother remarked, "Mr. Dewhurst loves a good fire. The nearer he gets, the warmer grows his affection."

"Of course that gets warm with the rest of me. I think my affections are all centred in my left knee to-night, sir; for I have a little rheumatism there, and the heat seems really kind to warm it. The fire is certainly the best part of it all."

"The best part for me is to see the brightness and enjoyment of so many young folks," said Mrs. Dewhurst.

"You see, Mr. Hartley, how it is. My daughter says I am mercenary, and my wife intimates that I am selfish. How good for mankind it is to have charity always at hand in the persons of the fair."

"At any rate, sir," replied Hartley, "I am glad to find a friend of the service in you, for we are not always very highly valued; and as for the fire, it is a pleasant feature. Imagine us all assembled for pleasure, and depending on

furs for warmth. Will you tell me," he added, turning to Mary, "why Mr. Dewhurst's gratitude is mercenary."

"I believe father had a ship saved from the British in the late war."

"Yes, sir; I had. I sent out a very fast ship of 600 tons, to the East Indies for coffee in '13, and coming home she was taken by an English ten-gun brig. It was a needless surrender entirely, for the captain let the brig come within gunshot, thinking him a Frenchman, and then was so panic-struck that he made no effort to get away whatever. The brig put a prize crew aboard my ship, and started her to England, but the Constitution overhauled her on the way, and changed her destination to suit me better."

"What was your ship's name?"

"The Saratoga."

"I remember her recapture very well, and a long chase she gave us. She would have escaped almost anything but the Constitution."

"What, you were on the Constitution, then!"

"I was a midshipman in her. Your captain made a very lame excuse for his capture. Bainbridge told him his luck was better than his desert, and advised him to keep awake."

"He followed the advice. He was so glad to get away, and so careful to get home safe, that he was almost too sharp. He lay hid down on the coast of Maine a long while before he dared venture to come home; and finally he slipped through the New London blockade and actually ran up behind Shelter Island at night. He was snugly hidden there, but *that* didn't satisfy him. He discharged the cargo—I had to have the coffee hauled in wagons to Williamsburg—and then he got everything possible out of the ship, put floats of hogsheads under her, and towed her up the Peconic Sound on a mud bank. She lay there till the war was over."

After a few minutes' longer talk several mutual acquaintances joined the group, which then divided into little

knots of talkers. The rooms began to fill. Hartley kept a seat with Mary and Isabel, whom he amused with his lively conversation for awhile longer. It was very pleasant for him. Mary listened with a ready laugh for his fun, and a ready rejoinder and quick appreciation for the remarks on solid subjects with which he tried her—an appreciation which delighted him. He found that she was actually well-informed in politics, and that both she and Isabel took an interest in them. Mary avowed that she was in favor of the Compromise, but Isabel was strong for the House bill. Hartley refused to have any politics in such a division of sentiment, and asked Mary for the first dance. She was “engaged for *that* one.”

“May I have the second, then?”

“With pleasure.”

Isabel said she never danced, and Hartley asked to sit by her. Then, as the sets were forming, a handsome, elegant young fellow came to claim Mary. Hartley felt a vague displeasure at his fine appearance and at the manner in which he hung on Mary’s words and attended to her slightest wants; and his discomfort increased as he watched Mary’s pleasure in meeting the gentleman.

“Who is that handsome youngster?” he asked Isabel, as the pair moved off, the observed of all.

Isabel smiled and replied, “He would’nt thank you for that appellation, I think. Mr. Martin is twenty-five years old, and though he looks younger, his friends think he is a man.”

“Excuse me, I was careless not to remember that he might be your friend.”

“He is only a slight acquaintance of mine. My cousin Mary knows him better, I believe.”

“And does she like—I mean, is he agreeable—I should say—” He stopped, quite embarrassed by the difficulty into which his eagerness had led him.

“You mean does Miss Dewhurst like his style?” asked Isabel, kindly.

"Yes, that is—I—"

"I can't say as to that, but I suppose so. Most people do." Then, seeing that Hartley was uncomfortable, she went on as if to relieve him, "Mr. Hartley, you do not remember me in the least."

After a look of surprise and a moment of thought, he replied, "I believe I must plead guilty to the charge."

"And yet you once professed to admire—indeed I may say"—she blushed a little here—"that you professed an unchangeable attachment."

Seriously and surprised, "Why, Miss Terrell, I—are you sure that I am the man? I—"

"It was several years ago. Are you so forgetful of solemn vows? Then I must remind you."

"I am sure—"

"Don't you remember little Bell, whom you selected when you were ten years old, as the object of your constant affection?"

"*Little Bell!* Indeed I do—" (rising)—"and I am as glad to see you as flowers in May. This is a most delightful surprise. And to think of my not remembering the name."

"After all your vows, and your injunctions to me not to forget!"

"Indeed, Little Bell, I almost—I do feel quite young again to see you—I feel no more than ten—"

"In short, as the young man that tried to preach, and couldn't, said 'You feel—oh! you don't know *how* you feel; and you want to say—oh! you don't know *what* you want to say.' Harry and Little Bell have grown older since then; at least, Little Bell has, and wondrous wise, Mr. Hartley."

He was old enough to see the point, and wise enough to appreciate the gentleness of the rebuff. "I hope Miss Terrell will be as good a friend to Mr. Hartley as Little Bell was to Harry," he answered.

"She doesn't know his deserts, sir, and Harry was a good *boy*, if I remember rightly."

"If you will take his word, he is not entirely undeserving of friendship now." The talk was getting serious.

He went on : "But, my dear Miss Terrell, we men need the kindness of good women whether we deserve it or no, and I believe it was meant that we should have it."

"Well, Mr. Hartley, I am very well acquainted with you through recollection and through others, and if there is any friendly ability in me, you would have had the benefit of it," she said seriously.

"Thank you. Shake hands on that."

It had gone further than Isabel liked, and she was now somewhat confused herself, but she did not withhold her hand. A pair of girls passing looked at them curiously and jealously, and one of them whispered, "To think of that proud thing thawing enough for such barefaced coquetry !" They passed on giggling.

Hartley spoke next. "But what can I do for you in this friendly partnership?"

"Never fear but I'll let you know if a time comes. To-night you may take me down to supper, if you have asked no one else."

"Thanks for the opportunity."

"Here comes Mr. Martin, bringing Mary back to me—or to you, for you dance with her next time, I believe."

Mary introduced the gentlemen, and they all chatted together for a few minutes. Hartley was forced to admit to himself that Martin was a very agreeable fellow. Martin soon went away to seek his partner engaged for the next dance, and Hartley had the pleasure of Mary's company to himself. It might be called so at least, for his newly found friend Isabel was entirely overlooked. He was looking as often as he dared into the blue deeps of Mary's eyes. From them flowed the subtle magnetism which puts a man into the condition called "in love;" and when they danced, her graceful rhythmic movements strengthened the charm.

After they sat down he obtained her promise for one

more dance, and unwillingly surrendered her to his successor.

Until his time came round again he was very much preoccupied in mind. The ladies wondered at his mistakes and silence. He kept a keen lookout all the time for Mary, and if her partner was ugly or awkward, he felt easy. If the gentleman was prepossessing, he was disquieted ; and when Martin danced with her, as it chanced again, he was quite uncomfortable. At the supper table he tried to get Isabel to talk of Martin, but with no more success than in his first attempt, for she refused to be drawn out. From this he inferred that Mary had a liking for Martin, which she had confided to Isabel.

His second dance with Mary was her last for the evening, and shortly afterward he enjoyed a double pleasure in assisting the ladies to their carriage. It was a pleasure to attend to the slightest need of such a beautiful girl, even to help her mother and cousin ; and it was an equal, though dissimilar pleasure, to think that he was taking her away from Martin.

He returned to the ball-room, for the hour was yet comparatively early, to enjoy some very dull gayety ; and finally, wearied by his unexpected sensations, he took his leave long before the close. A brisk walk of fifteen minutes carried him to the hotel where he intended to pass the night, and he was soon asleep, dreaming of little Bell, broiled sardines, the Missouri Compromise, and Mary Dewhurst.

CHAPTER III.

THE next day Hartley and Garnet made their application for orders to the Flying Fish, then fitting out at the Brooklyn Yard. Hartley secured them by writing to request an influential Congressman who did him favors, to interfere in their behalf at the Navy Department.

The tedious and small, though not unimportant duties of their positions in a receiving ship, had from the young officers that honorable attention which their fidelity required of them, and which the naval training of that day had made almost a second nature.

After supper they sat in Hartley's room reading and smoking together. Garnet sat perfectly still, reading intently, and smoking deliberately. Hartley read rapidly, turning the leaves often, puffed fiercely, and continually twisted a lock of his hair up into an unwilling horn. By and by Garnet laid down his book and looked at his friend. He did not speak, because he had a way of attracting his attention without interrupting him. It was a kind of magnetic language. Sure enough Hartley looked up after awhile.

"What is it, Will?" he asked.

"I wanted to know if you saw anybody at the ball last night who had any character."

"How? In what way do you mean?"

"Any one who seemed capable of seriousness, or of thinking steadily about life, or that even gave out any signs of a settled occupation—I mean anybody that naturally showed something of the true side of himself."

"That's a surprising question. Why do you ask it?"

"Because I have an idea of people at such places—"

"Where did you get it, old chap?"

"I have looked in, occasionally."

"Semi-occasionally, I should say. But why?"

"Because I think of people at such places always looking as near alike as possible, and acting as near up or down to a certain pattern as they can. They all seem to have laid aside common human nature, and all try to be *pleasant*. Every man aims to be very amusing, polite, and *gallant*, I believe they call it; and every woman's conduct is a mixture of weak small talk, simpering, and trying to get some fellow in love with her. Isn't it true?"

"That depends upon the people—no—I can hardly imagine enough such together to give that tone to the assembly."

"That is the impression I have got."

"William, you are young—you lack experience. If you had joined in the talk you might have found it different from your notions. You prepared yourself for a certain impression, and of course you received that impression. Some of those you saw were ill at ease, and smirked to hide it; some were foolish, and smiled from sympathy; some had a habit of smiling; some, doubtless, thought it the correct time and place to smile; and some felt full of fun or enjoyment and smiled with pleasure. As for showing anger or any other bad feeling, everybody knows that a festive meeting is not the place: beside, when people meet for pleasure, there is naturally less to call it out. But you can find the same traits of character there as anywhere else, by a little digging for them. The women—bless you!—you cannot tell what a woman is or what she is thinking about any more at a ball than anywhere else. They bring one another up to be lady-like and proper till it is inbred in them to keep back any prominent traits of character, especially in public. For all that they do their own planning and thinking and—the amount of it is that they are quietly running the machine."

"Perhaps that's why it runs so poorly."

"That's why it runs no worse."

"For all you say, I hold to it that balls are humbugs."

"These cynical ideas were inside of you at the start,

Will. You've had no chance to deduce them from experience."

"I retire."

"Conquered but not convinced."

"Just so."

After a little pause, Garnet went on: "Honestly, Hal, do you get any real satisfaction out of what you call festive meetings?"

"I don't know. I used to—" he heaved a sigh—"I believe I am getting to take less pleasure in them. You asked me awhile ago if I met anybody with character apparent in them. I made four new acquaintances last night, almost as soon as I got into the house, and every one of them showed a decided character."

"Tell me about them."

Hartley went on to describe the Dewhurst family and Isabel Terrell. Garnet noticed that Mary Dewhurst was spoken of last, that her name was not mentioned, and that but little was said of her. These slight hints awakened his suspicions, and he began to put questions. Having discovered the young lady's name, that she had received constant attention, and that his friend could not deny he thought her very charming, he asked in a suggestive tone whether Mr. Dewhurst wasn't pretty well off, and when Hartley answered that he believed he was, gave a very meaning "Humph!"

This made Hartley smile and wince at the same time, for he plainly read the current suspicion. He smiled at the sly suggestion about the money bags; and he winced because perhaps there was some correctness in the mistrust (though he would not own it to himself), and he was anxious to efface the idea from his friend's mind, without exactly seeing how. He almost attempted to create a counter impression by dwelling upon Isabel's attractions; but wise consideration kept him from the useless attempt to blind a person who knew him so well. He held his peace, and no more was said at the time.

Next day after that he went over to the city. After a call on Mrs. Van Meter, who kept him for a weary hour to listen to an account of the best part of the ball, which she declared he had missed by going away so soon, he availed himself of the invitation his new friends had given him at parting. He reached the elegant house, and found that the ladies were at home. After he had waited a few minutes in a parlor where every surrounding showed the hand of wealth and cultivation, Mrs. Dewhurst and the two girls came down.

It is a hard task for most men to maintain a rational conversation with three ladies for an hour, but Hartley did it well. He was modest enough to think it was because the ladies were uncommonly skilled in talk; and so it partly was, for two of them well knew the art of helping the visitor along. But he had seen much of the world and its people, had read a great deal, and was able to express himself in good flowing language. He did not need many suggestions on this occasion, and his audience was very well entertained.

Garnet would have noticed, had he been there, how soon Isabel became silent after the conversation had passed from the subject of their early days, and how, after they had spoken of mutual acquaintances, Hartley insensibly addressed himself to Mary. Perhaps Mrs. Dewhurst noticed it also, for mothers are keen observers of such things; but she showed no disposition to interfere.

After Hartley had gone, the ladies, as usual in such cases, had a little talk of their own over their visitor.

"Mother, what a nice man Mr. Hartley is," said Mary.

"Perhaps he is, my dear."

"Why perhaps?"

"I do not know him well enough to pronounce certainly on his merits."

"But you can see what he is."

"I can see what he appears to be, my dear."

"Well, at any rate, he looks and acts like a gentleman. Don't you think so, Bell?"

"Yes, I think so—that he looks like a gentleman."

"Now, Bell, you have known him all your life: don't you think he is a splendid fellow?"

"No. I dare say he is all a gentleman should be."

"Why do you say *no*, then?"

"He was a very nice *boy*, but I hav'nt seen him since till the day before yesterday."

"I'm sure you can't tell anything about anybody then."

"Mr. Hartley certainly acts and talks like a gentleman; and he was well dressed," said Mrs. Dewhurst.

"His glove was torn."

"Which one?"

"The right one."

"I like to see neat gloves."

"It was a fresh tear, mother; he must have done it putting it on."

"Was it?" said Mrs. Dewhurst, smiling. "I didn't notice so closely."

"He has a pleasant voice. He doesn't shout at you," said Isabel.

"That is a good sign in his favor. And I noticed that he sat still," remarked Mrs. Dewhurst.

"And he doesn't twist his face about like Mr. Danneron, or smile all the time like that young John Fooms."

"He can talk well, Mary; you ought to know that at least," said Isabel, innocently.

"Why?"

"You were surely attentive enough to listen."

"He didn't talk to me more than to any one else."

Isabel, laughing: "Who accused you of it, little coz?"

Mrs. D., thoughtfully: "I wonder if he belongs to the church."

Meanwhile the subject of these remarks was unconsciously returning to his ship. He would not have been dissatisfied had he known the real impression he had made.

For the next month Hartley was a changed man. There came over him a certain preoccupation, an absence of mind which led him sometimes when on duty or among his messmates into droll mistakes. Garnet remarked it first, and in a fortnight was prepared for his friend's avowal. The other members of the mess, less observant and further off, saw it more slowly ; but the dullest was bound to notice it at last. Hartley had to stand the customary joking which is the privilege of messmates, but it was hard to bear unmoved after the party had once scented a love affair.

When he came to a meal with a quill pen behind each ear, some one suggested he had been writing to name the day : another thought he was sighing for the wings of a dove and had taken part of those of a goose as a substitute : while a third begged Garnet to use his influence in procuring as much wedding cake for the mess as possible. Another quoted : "Bring saffron blossoms for his bold young head." Another thought he had asked orders to the Fish to escape, his courage having failed.

Hartley, having been in many navy messes and some love messes before, took it all meekly, and his very meekness increased the general hilarity. When the servant said "Butter, sah," on one occasion he replied promptly, "I'll be there." When he carved a roast goose for the caterer another day, his absence of mind was manifested by a remarkable ceremoniousness and care in the distribution of the pieces. The pulling bone was made to serve as a hook, wherewith to hold up small jokes on his matrimonial intentions. He started on deck without his cap, repeatedly ; he went to quarters without his sword ; he forgot to salute the deck ; he gave the wrong orders at drill, and in his long, rambling, broken talks with Garnet he tried to smoke more than one empty or unlighted pipe. Truly his messmates had grounds of suspicion, for, in addition to his vagaries on board, he was continually wandering off ashore. From the very first, attracted by Mary Dewhurst, he felt in rapid succession—if there was really time for succession—an interest,

a deeper interest, a delight in her company—and love. It was the genuine, old-fashioned passion of young folks, a thing of rapid growth always, and stimulated in this case by beauty, vivacity, and the not cold light of a pair of rich blue eyes. It was an unreasoning emotion, but none the less enthralling on that account—rather the more so, since that very circumstance was a sign of the presence of one of nature's powers about which we cannot reason. And nature was not unkind in this case. She was drawing together, with her unseen might, two young people suited to each other in health, in station, in culture, and in bent of mind.

That which ruled Hartley, influenced Mary. She was not so rapid in going through the transition periods of feeling, and they were not so strong, or, at least, not so much felt by herself; but she also was under the spell. Perhaps, as a woman's deep affection is said to be longer-lived than a man's, so also it has more phases in its growth, or takes a longer time in each; just as it is said that the fruit soonest ripe falls first.

Nature was kind. Hartley was what we have seen, and Mary what she seemed to be—an ingenuous, modest, vivacious girl, lovely in face and in form, with somewhat of genuine education, and notwithstanding her almost ignorant innocence, with an abundance of woman's blessed gift of tact. From the first Hartley's polished manly bearing had pleased her eye, as his voice had sounded sweet in her ear. This was only a good beginning with her, though it would have been the end of some girls; but by degrees, as she saw something of his mind—and he gave her frequent opportunities—she admired him. Then she began to look for him at social gatherings, and to feel satisfied when she met his pleased eyes. She was almost certain to find his look awaiting hers. His frequent calling at their house, where he was a privileged visitor (Mrs. Dewhurst having by this time found out all about his people), was pleasant, too. She liked best for him to come in the daytime, though she would have felt guilty if she had ever thought of it; for

then Isabel generally found an excuse for withdrawing and leaving them alone together for a delightful talk. In the evening Mrs. Dewhurst and Isabel were always with them. Mr. Dewhurst would sometimes come in, too, and liking the straightforward young man, would lead him into long narratives of the wars with England and Tripoli. Though Hartley sighed for relief, and chafed with impatience for the company of his more congenial listener, he was too well-bred to let any sign escape.

“Those words he spoke, but spoke not from his heart.
His outward smile concealed his inward smart.”

Mrs. Dewhurst saw it all and was pleased as only such things could please her ; and he lost no ground with Mary, who sat drinking in his words with an absorption young women do not usually feel for war stories.

But if Mary preferred the afternoons so, very much more did Hartley. He never met Mr. Martin, the young *élégant* of the ball room, at that time, while in the evening he was usually a fellow-visitor, sharing Mary's attention and awakening strong jealousies. The fact was that Mary had never cared at all for Martin, who had been an acquaintance and friend from boyhood ; and she continued still, in spite of Isabel's warning, to attribute his attention to friendship. There may have been in this, however, an influence from that tenderness of disposition which made her dread to give pain to anything : she may have been wilfully deceiving herself. At any rate she imagined what no one else, observing Mr. Martin's conduct and bearing toward her, was able to believe. Mr. Dewhurst saw it and kept silence, for he had lived a life which had taught him the power of money, and Martin was not only rich, but had a promising reputation as a business man. Mrs. Dewhurst saw it, and held her peace, for she liked Martin, loved her daughter, and could see no objection to their marriage if they themselves should wish it. Indeed, she rather desired it should come to pass. Some of his wife's finer feeling was

in Mr. Dewhurst's mind; and some of his coarser motive was mingled with hers, as she thought complacently that Mary would be very comfortable, and able to appear very well in society. Isabel was the only one who understood the true condition of affairs, and the only one who was anxious to help Hartley. Mary laughed at the idea of a possible entanglement with Martin, and Hartley did even worse.

He had been getting deeper and deeper in love, and at the same time more and more jealous of Mary. He told Garnet about his feelings in a general way, a sense of the unmanliness of complaint keeping back a full statement; and though Garnet saw many a little thing which was a complement to the confession, his natural dislike of any discussion or even mention of deep personal feeling, joined to his cynicism of love, restrained open sympathy. Hartley would not have thought of seeking it elsewhere, for his passion was sacred to him. When he was becoming discouraged and hopeless of success, Isabel saw it and tried to reanimate him. She was a more competent reader of her innocent cousin's mind, in which love was now but dawning, than any man could be; and of all men, Hartley was least capable of getting at the truth. Isabel tried to make him give her his full confidence, she depending upon his request for her friendship; but he, scarcely remembering the request and its granting, held back and avoided any confidant of his feelings. She at first thought it diffidence, but his growing reserve mortified her in showing her the mistake. It was a deep wound to one who had lived so much within herself and was usually so distant and reticent. The thought that she seldom sought a confidence, and that Hartley undervalued his distinction, a sense of injustice and hurt pride in the remembrance of her promise of friendship, and a feeling that she might have been overbold, all were in her mind at once; and she had been more than woman if she had not been hurt. Her good sense made her forgive Hartley when the first of her mortification was over; but then he had put himself into still worse plight and was out of the reach of her aid.

Hartley sought every opportunity of meeting Mary, and circumstances had favored him. For some time he made his afternoon calls uninterrupted ; but Martin, finding them out, resolved he would not permit a dangerous rival so great an advantage. So he took to calling afternoons. The consequence was that the two sometimes met in Mrs. Dewhurst's parlors, and suffered mutual tortures. While they were polite to each other, and amusing to Mary, they were each writhing internally. As Hartley from his short acquaintance had less personal intimacy with Mary than Martin had, so he had a greater jealousy ; while his disposition made him less patient to bear, and less able to follow up advantages than the other. All this time there was no word, though there were many looks of love. Hartley resolved more than once to bring matters to a conclusion of some kind, but dread of ill luck deterred him.

One day, calling later than had become customary, he rang the bell, and then stepped back on the stone landing to wait for the servant. From the landing there was a view into a parlor window near by, and Hartley thoughtlessly glanced in. Poor fellow ! he saw Mary standing by the mantel with her beautiful head inclined, and Martin putting a flower in her hair. He would have gone away, but at that instant the servant appeared, and he went in, he didn't know why. He passed Martin in the hall, coming out smiling, but did not speak to him or look at him. Mary seemed a little confused at first, but soon fell into her usual strain of vivacious talk. She found that she had it all to herself, and tried in vain to elicit something more than mere replies from Hartley. He was obstinately silent, and in a few minutes arose to go away, muttering about not feeling very well. Mary, concerned enough to have made any body but him wonder, followed him, and in the hall they had a few words.

"Excuse me—that's a beautiful rose in your hair." He reached out his hand, and took it out of its place.

"Yes—very," she replied, a little angry but more embarrassed.

"Where did you get it?"

"It was given me by a—by Mr. Martin," she answered, blushing a little.

"Indeed! did you have it in your hand at all?" he asked sarcastically.

"What do you mean, sir?"

"You know very well"—he flung the rose savagely on the floor—"Good day, Miss Dewhurst."

"Stop, Mr. Hartley—what do you mean?—you forget yourself, I think," she said, advancing.

"I beg your forgiveness, I did, I confess," he answered, suddenly contrite. He picked up the rose. "Allow me to make what amends I can." He offered it to her, but as she reached her hand to take it, he withdrew it. "O! if you would only take it from me"—he said, with a strange thrill and tremble in his voice—"take it as—if you only knew"—Mary dropped her eyes at the first word, and stood silent, pale, and agitated. She had heard the signal woman ever recognizes. If Hartley could have stopped right there, he would have turned his fancied reverse into substantial advantage, but the unfortunate fellow had no able-bodied friend in hearing to stop his mouth and drag him away. He got that far, and a jealous recollection struck him like a twinge of neuralgia. He laid the rose down on the hall-table. "Excuse me," he remarked stiffly, "I suppose I should offer my congratulations"—there was a short silence—"Good day."

And Mary recovered herself just in time to see the door shut. She went straight to her own room and thought about it, all in a whirl; told herself she was angry with Hartley; and then had a good cry. She had a headache afterward, but when Isabel brought up the cheering cup of tea, made certain involved and feeble statements, which, without being quite confessions, went to show that Hartley's place in her thoughts was a good deal higher than at that moment he dared to hope.

CHAPTER IV.

A SQUARE, solid-looking ship lay off the Battery, rather on the North River side, riding at single anchor to the strong ebb from the Hudson, one warm, still afternoon in March, after the events described.

Everything proclaimed her an American sloop-of-war, from the black paint and white streak to the slender pole above her royal-masts, even had the looker-on been unable to tell her nationality from the colors at the peak, lazily lifting to unfold in the slow breeze, and, unsuccessful always, dropping again to the vertical. Ten guns protruded their black muzzles from the white band on either side. Above the rail of the light spar-deck were to be seen the heads and shoulders of the working crew. The pipes of the boatswain's mates were heard at frequent intervals, a rushing tramp of feet in tune would follow, and presently a large metallic box would rise swiftly over the rail on the side opposite from the shore. Then would come the sharp pipe to belay, followed by "lower away roundly ;" and the box would disappear. The square blood-red flag at the fore told the initiated what was the business in hand—the ship was taking in her powder from the lighter alongside.

The band of copper encircling the ship just above the water's edge is burnished bright, and the paint under the scuppers is clean. There are no men loafing aloft, and no Irish pendants are flying. The yards are square, the rigging taut, the ports hang level, the rudder is amidships, and no undue noise arises from the men at work.

Mr. Hartley has the deck, and is blue from causes best known to himself, besides being hungry and a trifle savage that the powder lighter should have come alongside at an unseasonable hour and delayed the ward-room dinner. The men are working splendidly at the whips, and the midshipmen attending carefully to the tanks below, so the lieu-

tenant has only himself with whom to find fault. Poor Hartley ! he would be uneasy anywhere just now, but the restrictions of the quarter-deck seem unbearable. He walks back and forth over the clean white deck, like a bear in a cage. He is evidently in so safe a condition that the three quartermasters sitting at the foot of the mizzen-mast in the warm sun have made bold to raise their voices above the low tones allowable in that vicinity.

The three men are interesting. One is tall and burly, with an eye like a hawk's and a nose somewhat resembling the beak of that bird. This is Bill Burke, commonly known as "Still Bill" among the older seamen throughout the navy, and famed for mighty muscles. In contrast to him is a dried, crooked little fellow, with a long neck that looks twisted, a face seamed by a million wrinkles, with features in constant motion, a pair of black mouse eyes like shining beads set in his head, and a most dandified dress. He has a voluminous handkerchief about his neck, his clothes are all new and nice, his broad collar is turned back over a monkey-jacket adorned with many buttons. Wherever he has been able to put a bit of colored silk embroidery that would pass muster, he has done so, be it star-work, pocket-corner, badge, or watch-mark. At present he is showing considerable dexterity in drawing with a pencil an eagle on a piece of canvas. This oddity is named, or, at least, has for many years been styled on the books of paymasters, Wm. Johnson, but his messmates always call him "Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones, sir," or "Ap Jones," or "Ap" for short. The third man is an intelligent looking fellow, and very young in appearance for his rating. His name is Henry Thompson, and he hails from the end of Point Judith, or "P'int Judy P'int," as he calls it. As we approach we hear the talk.

[Johnson.] "He had a cork heel."

[Thompson.] "Who?"

"Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones, sir."

"The dickens he had ! Why?"

"He lost his left heel off Marocky. A shot come into the bridle-port when the ship was in stays, and it tuk off his heel, and went through the cabin door, and out at the open port aft, and never teched a finger more. He was third luff in the Peacock. It never teched the deck but once-t."

"Why?"

"Bekaze she was jest but hove in stays, and somewhat pitchin' then—"

"Ships mostly rolls in stays."

"Well, let 'em. And her mostly pitchin', as I was sayin', the shot—"

"They mostly rolls in—"

"Supposin' they does. Can't you emagine one a-pitch-in', say once-t or twice-t in stays?"

"No."

"You can't. You go to sea longer, then, young man."

"I 'spect to."

"I dessay you never see a tail."

Thompson having no reply ready he went on, "And the shot, as she rose to it, come in the bridle-port and passed—"

"I was in that fight myself, I 'spect. What battery was firin' at you?"

"Thompson, how do you expect that shot to ever git through the ship, if you keep interruptin' me this way?"

"You had it out o' the cabin window once, and fetched it back and put it into the bridle-port again."

"Well." In a moment he resumed, "He never teched ardent sperrits."

"Who?"

"Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones, sir," replied Johnson proudly.

"Who was he?"

Johnson, severely, and twisting his neck around to look Thompon in the face, "Young man, do you mean to tell me you don't know who"—here Burke broke in, "Ap Jones, hold the end of this bunting and help me draw the threads." This stopped the complaint of Johnson, but in a moment he asked, "Burke, what's the matter o' Mr. Hartley?"

"How so?"

"What makes him look so damn-your-eyes and all-in-the-wind like, since we left the Virginny."

"Some gal, I 'spect," answered Burke.

"He's backin' and fillin' like his helm was lashed hard down and all hands gone below."

"You see, Ap, some pretty craft has hove him to, and made him show his colors; and he likes her looks so much he's left his main top-sail to the mast, and his ensign at the peak, and started to go aboard of her," remarked Thompson.

"Sail ho!" whispered Ap, to warn the others of Hartley's approach. He resumed innocently before the officer was out of hearing: "This 'ull be a regular rushin' wheel cloth. 'Gay but not gaudy, as the monkey said when he painted his tail sky-blue.'"

"How will you paint it?"

"I'll show you. See the eagle here—he'll be *red* with *blue* wings—and the paper in his mouth, *yeller*. The guns underneath—I'll make 'em the nat'ral color—*black*—and the pile o' shot. The anchor I'll have *green*, and all of 'em on a *white* shield with the motter of the United States. 'Don't give up the ship' on the paper in the bird's mouth. Around the shield 'll be *blue* with a *red* leach."

[T. approvingly.] "That'll be all ship-shape and Bristol-fashion; won't it, Burke?"

"Fine."

"And the larboard side the same?"

"For them suckin' commodores to lean on? Ketch me. I'm goin' to make it a plain green, with a yeller star on a blue ground, to larboard—and mind you don't shift it end for end."

"It's no gal that's the matter with Mr. Hartley, for now I think of it, he hasn't been ashore in two weeks' time."

"I 'spect it some o' them chaplain books he's been a-readin', then. When I was in the Hudson in '17, one time there was seven parsons took to comin' aboard o' nights, and preachin' and prayin', and what out o' curiosity and

bein' unable to sleep decent—I slung on the starboard side o' the half-deck, d'ye see, and they was on the port side with the meetin'—I used to lay and watch them by the hour. They was havin' a—a 'vival, I b'lieve they called it—and it was quare-like to watch 'em. The men mostly took to goin', and every night they'd get worked up after a spell and holler and *cuss*—some of 'em—and one parson a-prayin', and the rest a-goin' around amongst the men a-talkin' to 'em. 'Strive, brother.' 'Pray without ceasin'.' 'Knock, and it shall be opened.' 'How is it with you, my brother?' and a devil of a lot more stuff. The officers in the ward-room came out after awhile and they ketched it too, but they didn't lay down and holler like the men. One old parson used to go up to a man layin' on deck, kneel down by him, and rub his head like he was puttin' on grease."

Said Thompson, much interested, "What come of it? how did it all end."

"Why, you see, the master-at-arms 'ud come around every night at two bells and put out the lights accordin' to reg'lar orders, and that 'ud bust up the meetin', and the parsons 'ud look kinder sorry and go off without gettin' half their 'vival out. They done that several nights, till at last one of 'em struck a bright idee. When the master-at-arms come and said 'Cap'n's orders, sir,' and was just a-goin' to blow the light out on the purser's table, the old parson he says, says he, 'Wait, my friend. Is it customary to extinguish the lights at this hour?' The master-at-arms told him as how it sartinly was. 'Has your captain no power to keep them burning if he wish?' says the parson. 'Yes, sir,' says Jimmy Legs. 'Tell him then that I beg of him light to carry on the work of God—one little light to shine upon his holy word.' I don't know what Jimmy Legs said to the old man, but you know it was nothin' like that."

"My soul, yes."

"Any way he come back with permission for lights till four bells that night; and after that they sent for 'em reg-

'lar every night, till at last the old man wouldn't stand it any longer. The captain's steward was a chummy o' mine, and he told me one night when they was all a hollerin' and groanin' like hell on the half deck about three bells, that the old man jumped up and throw'd down a book he was readin' and said he be dam if he'd stand the dam noise any longer, and he sent the orderly to ask the parsons into the cabin as soon as they was done. When they come in he told 'em as how it was contrairy to the Articles o' War, and they must come earlier if they wanted more time. They tried to argufy about 'the work of the Lord,' but the old man jest caught 'em flat aback. He told 'em the Lord couldn't do any work in his ship after two bells, and laughed, and asked 'em to take a glass o' wine. They wouldn't take it, and one of 'em told the old man he was 'bound quickly and galled bitterness,' leastways the steward said so, though I see no sense in it whatsomever."

"Did they come back?"

"Bless you, yes; every night for two weeks. Then it sort o' slacked up and begun to get quiet again, and the men begun to stop goin' to the 'vival. And then the parsons p'inted a day for a babtizin', and got the captain's permission to babtize the men. The old man he said they better come over in the mornin' watch, when the men was stripped, and he'd let 'em have the use o' the head pump so they could babtize all hands. 'I might come out myself,' says he, 'and a little extra hose to reach the poop would do my business too,' says he. I was aft, cleaning the binnacle, and I heard tell 'em myself. I tell you the old man didn't care nothin' for nobody—but he drinkt a heap. Now there was Thomas Ap Catesby R—"

"Oh, damn *him*! Heave ahead with the babtizin'."

[Johnson, offended.] "Young man, if you ever sails with Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones you will get to be more politer, I hope, and a better sailor, sure."

"Well, you needn't breeze up about it. Heave ahead with the babtizin'."

[Johnson continued.] "Well—the parsons was Babtisses, and Methodys, and Prispeterins, and they 'lowed the men might choose whether they'd be sprinkled or 'mersed. They 'greed among thesselves to let the men settle it for thesselves out of the Bible, but the two Babtisses sprung their luff on the others and got clear to windward. The day before the babtizin they 'come aboard and went around amongst the men, and told 'em how they'd all go to hell if they wasn't 'mersed. So next day—it was a Sunday, I believe—they all come off in the afternoon watch about six bells, and commenced for to babtize. When they called on all who desired to be 'mersed to step forward, the whole kit and boodle of 'em come along, and ye ought to see the Methodys and Prispeterins look at one another.

"They had a ladder rigged into the water, and a gratin' across the foot of it, and one of the Babtisses he stood on it in about half a fathom of water and babtized. Jerry Dowling was a bos'n's mate in the Hudson—Lord love ye, he was a man and a half—a reg'lar three-decker—weighed three hundred. When it came his turn, he went down the ladder and the whole thing sprung with him. I thought the lashins was gone and him and the little parson was a walking the plank like, together, and a-goin' to heaven, like they ought to—by water, you know. But the stuff was good and the gratin' held 'em all right. The little parson was getting tired by this time, babtizin' so many, and when Jerry come down he says, says he—the little Babtis', you know, sort o' weak like, 'We will now *endeavor* to babtize our brother.' He like to dropped him, but bless you! I had a line all ready to heave Jerry, if he had.

"After he got him up, and Jerry was a-goin' up the side a-drippin' like a swab, the other Babtis' standin' on the marine gratin', said, 'We will now sing the hymn, 'Tis done, the great transaction's done.'"

"Was that the last of it?"

"Mostly it was, 'cept it wasn't a month 'fore half o' them fellows was in the bay or the brig, one, along o' goin'

ashore too much, you know. But some of 'em is 'ligious to this day. I know one o' them fellows in this ship now."

"Who is it."

"Still Bill, there."

"Better for me, if I was. Who teached ye to lie, Ap Jones?" said Burke.

"Who is it, Ap, sure enough?"

"Think I'd tell you to have you devillin' him?" a pause.

[Thompson, reflectively.] "I 'spect that's what he's swallowed."

"Who?"

"Mr. Hartley."

"Yes, I reckon he has."

"I heard one o' them fellows down at that thing-um-a-jig—Bethel, in Water Street. That man know'd what he was about—he'd been to sea. He was tellin' 'em how a man was in danger o' hell like a ship runnin' close along a reef to leeward and a p'int makin' out ahead, and no room for stern-board in stays. There was a merchant-service chap a settin' on the pulpit steps, and he got awful worked up. At last the preacher turns and hails him loud enough to take the hair off your head. '*Hard down!*' says he, '*huff! brother, LUFF!!* and you'll weather hell yet with the lee leaches of your top-sails smoking.'"

"Fust-rate."

Thompson had been rather loud in his imitation of the preacher's exhortation, and the three quartermasters were startled to hear a stern voice, which they well knew for the captain's, exclaim, "Mr. Hartley! the quartermasters are forgetting where they are." Hartley's order came instantly: "Less noise aft there." "Aye, aye, sir," answered Burke, wisely taking the spokesmanship. "Good Lord!" whispered Thompson, I believe the old man's goin' to have a drill now." "No, he ain't," replied Johnson, "but he knows what he's about. That's the way to make the men smart. Now Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones, etc. etc."

The colloquy of the quartermasters was interrupted by

the captain's walking aft, they becoming respectfully silent as he approached.

Captain Merritt was not a man to attract attention at first sight, but one who grew mightily upon you with acquaintance. In certain respects he was a product peculiar to the Navy. He was quiet by inclination, though he could come to the front on occasion, fastidious in dress, with his niceness leaning to neatness rather than to show; gifted with a habit of plain politeness which sometimes rose into gracious urbanity, and possessing a keen though much repressed sense of humor. He was a short and slender man, though very broad across the shoulders, and he looked about forty-five years old. He had a heavy brown beard, was pale and a little bald, and he had the steadiest, coolest, most commanding gray eye in the Navy. He was scrupulously just to all, enforcing Navy law even upon himself, and the only path to his favor was faithfulness in duty. Still he seemed to think, like Lord Bacon, that roughness is a needless cause of discontent; that severity makes men fear, but roughness causes hate. He associated but little with his officers, probably from a feeling that familiarity might lessen respect, even if it did not breed contempt, and he had many drills. His ship was not sought by officers who did not desire labor and discipline, and those who sailed with him were never disappointed in their expectations. He spared himself less than he did his subordinates, for in addition to close, careful attention to common duties, he was a hard student of scientific and professional subjects. Captain Merritt's idea in life seemed to be conscientious concentration of his forces and talents on the service, suffering no outside matter to long occupy his mind. He made no attempt even to save money, trusting to his growing sons and to Providence for his wife's support in case of his death, and spending no more thought on lucre than was necessary to keep him out of debt. He was very nearly the type of the Navy Captain as he should be. There was too much conscience in his composition, however, to make

it likely that other officers would either resemble him very closely or like him very much : besides which he was usually too cool and ceremonious to be a popular person.

Presently a very ugly man, with a tawny complexion and sandy hair and whiskers, came up the ward-room ladder and saluted the quarter-deck. It was Mr. Alexander Campbell McKizick, first lieutenant. He was not dressed with great elegance, for his clothes were all rather large, and somewhat baggy ; but he showed the sailor in all his words and movements. He respectfully reported, "Powder in and stowed, sir."

"Very good, sir," replied the captain, with a restrained smile and an involuntary twinkle in his eye. "I needn't ask if the gunner has stowed it well for I see you've been in the magazine yourself."

"That's true," answered the worthy and careful luff ; "and it's stowed none the worse for that ; but how did you know it, sir ?"

"Your back scraped an acquaintance with the white-wash as you came up the magazine hatch."

"Lord ! what a sight for the quarter-deck !" ejaculated Mr. McKizick after looking over his shoulder ; "excuse me, sir, but it's too bad. I'll go and brush it off."

"No, Mr. McKizick, I want to see you now," said the captain. He had noticed that the men were grinning about the deck at the first luff's white back, and he did not care to give them a chance to think he had sent that important officer below to brush his jacket.

"Here's the key of the magazine, sir. I thought maybe you had better tell me where to find it in case of need."

"Very true. I shall take out the right-hand little drawer of the bureau in my stateroom, put the key in the pigeon-hole, and let it lie back of the drawer."

Here Hartley sung out an order : "Aloft, and get the whips off the main-yard !"

The captain remarked : "I like Mr. Hartley's style of giving orders. He seems certain of prompt obedience."

"The men like it, too: they'll do as much for him as for me, now."

"A fine young fellow, Mr. McKizick, attentive and careful. I'd like to see him study more."

"He's had the name of a good student, heretofore, and he's well posted, sir. He speaks French and Spanish, and knows nearly as much of the profession as Mr. Garnet does."

"Is Mr. Garnet so very well informed, then?"

"Uncommonly well, sir. He makes no display, but you'll see he hardly ever makes a mistake either."

"I want no better officers. I shall feel safe to sleep at night in their watch on deck. But what is the matter with Mr. Hartley of late. He seems out of sorts."

"I don't know, sir."

"He isn't sick?"

"He takes his grub regular, sir."

"He never drinks?"

"No—not beyond a glass at dinner. I noticed his absent-mindedness—in fact, the mess jokes him about it a little; but he keeps his affairs to himself."

"Between himself and Mr. Garnet, I suppose. But what is the joke on him."

"They do say—he's in love, sir."

"Oh, if that's all he'll get over it as soon as we are off soundings."

"If that's it, he's got it pretty bad. Have you heard from the charts yet, sir?"

"They'll be here within a week, and we shall sail as soon as they come."

"No objection to my mentioning it to the officers, I suppose, sir."

"Not in the least. Is there any improvement in Mr. Dularge?"

"I think he'll be very much of a muchness, sir."

"Keep an eye on him, and let me know if you think he can be safely trusted with the deck."

"Aye, aye, sir: Mr. Briggs will do, I think. He seems very anxious to advance."

"And the midshipmen?"

"Just about the regular set, sir; full of meanness and smartness and stupidity. I've seen so many of 'em I can't tell 'em apart, hardly."

"You must try to discriminate, Mr. McKizick: it does a great deal to let them see that you take notice of application. And, by the way, I heard you swear at the main-top, loosing to a bowline this morning. Please to remember that I do not permit swearing in either officers or men on duty."

"Aye, aye, sir. You see, Captain Merritt, I got a little in the way of swearing last cruise, for there was seventy odd Dagos aboard, and the poorest set of men you ever saw."

The captain smiled, thinking he had heard that McKizick's habit was older than "last cruise," but he said nothing.

Just then Mr. Cornwallis Duncan Dularge, a young and gorgeous lieutenant, came up the ladder, saluted the deck ceremoniously, started toward Hartley at the fife-rail, and was just in the middle of a very military salute, as he said, "I'll relieve you—" when he stumbled over an eye-bolt. He made the rush, undignified and ungraceful, which a man always makes to keep from falling, and went straight for Hartley with extended arms. That gentleman stepped nimbly aside and Dularge clutched the head braces. The captain turned away his head, but McKizick guffawed aloud.

Hartley asked Dularge politely if he could be of any assistance, but the gorgeous creature, picking himself up, merely repeated, this time without a salute, "I'll relieve you—"

"Very good, sir. I've just had the sweepers piped. The starboard bower is down, with thirty fathoms at the water's edge. Report the gig manned to the captain at one bell." And Hartley went below.

Dularge was an incompetent and conceited fellow, loud-voiced, very gay and frequently in bad taste in his dress, ignorant alike of books and men, and very proud of his family descent. His chief accomplishment was dancing, and his best pleasure something good to eat. At the same time he pretended to be able to speak several languages, to understand music, to know all seamanship, to kill all ladies young and fair who exposed themselves to his discriminating gaze, and to do many other things; and as long as his money lasted, he possessed other pleasures beside those of the table. He was one of those men even now to be sometimes found in the service, though not of it; small souls who, incapable of recognizing the dignity of their position as servants of the nation, and the self-sacrifice it requires, make of the service a convenience. It would improve discipline and *esprit* to remove these parasites—in fact the service itches to be rid of them—but unfortunately they usually have enough Congressional influence to insure their permanency.

Hartley went below, down two ladders into a rather dark ward-room where there still sat four officers talking over the table which the servants were clearing off. Garnet made a silent fifth. The four were Mr. Briggs, a passed midshipman, who was just off leave of absence, and presumably very spooney. Dr. Bobus, the surgeon, a solid chunk of a little man, with considerable learning and ability, and a kind heart under his crust of dignity; Mr. Owens, the purser, who was an ordinary sort of a person; and the marine officer. The last was a peculiar man, in that to all appearance he was entirely devoid of sentiment. He was almost an animal. He was vulgar, stolid, and lazy, ignorant of nearly everything beyond the requirements of his easy position, fond of drink and other sensualities, and utterly incapable of understanding love in any other than the brutal sense. He had no conscience beyond the code of honor, which gave him certain notions of what could not be done by a gentleman. His only redeeming point

was his bravery, which made him more respected than one would suppose possible. He was gross in body, fiery in face, and awkward in manner. Such was Lieutenant Robbins.

This was the set of companions with whom Hartley and Garnet were to live for probably three years. They were fortunate in their messmates. From most of their associates they could obtain new knowledge of life, or the satisfaction of mutual respect; from the others, the amusement of observation at a safe distance.

After Hartley had satisfied his appetite with the dried-up dinner which by ancient custom fell—and by modern usage still falls—to the officer of the deck, he took his cigar and went on the gun-deck. Going forward on the white deck past the shining black guns, he found Garnet absorbing in vapor the brains of his familiar spirit, his pipe Satan, and listening to the talk of the other officers gathered there smoking. Garnet joined Hartley in a place a little apart, abaft the forward gun, and for awhile they sat in silence.

Presently Garnet spoke.

"We shall be out of this inside of ten days."

"Yes," replied Hartley carelessly.

"Then for a little fighting, hey? You'll get a chance to swing a cutlass yet, Hal."

"I'm not anxious."

Garnet looked annoyed and began to reply, but stopped after a slight essay to speak and devoted himself to his pipe. The smoke arose in thick, cloudy wreaths above his head, but Hartley's freshly lighted cigar began to burn dimly. After awhile Garnet asked him if he thought the Fish was on her best lines.

Hartley replied gloomily, "I don't know, Will."

"Haven't you noticed?"

"No—yes, I believe I did, too."

"Well, what do you think of her trim?" asked Garnet.

"Trifle by the stern yet."

"It won't take McKizick long to find it out," said Garnet; "he knows the ship has always been good for nine knots on a bowline, and he'll get it out of her again."

No response. Garnet resumed in a minute: "You know you have to make an early haul of the main yard."

Still no answer, and Garnet turned to look at his friend. The poor fellow was staring fixedly across the North River into the west, entirely abstracted and very woe-begone, and his cigar was quite out. Garnet thought of the afternoon when they had gazed together across the East River, and felt that his presentiment on that occasion had been prophetic.

Hartley looked at him abruptly and said, as if answering his questioning look, "Will, I must see her again."

"Better not, Hal," responded Garnet quickly; "you have parted from her once, and you may as well not—"

Hartley interrupted him. "I have made my mind up. I shall go to-night."

"Enough said," replied his friend; and after a slight pause, "Tell me what kind of a woman she is." This was the one topic of which Hartley was full, on which alone he was able to talk; and he was almost thankful for the opportunity and the relief.

"She is beautiful, Will," he commenced. Garnet smiled "*Beautiful*, sir. She is not very tall, or very short, either; about medium height. She has brown hair, with little waves and curls in it, and she wears it low, rippling across her forehead." ("All of it?" thought Garnet). "And her nose is little and fine, and the least bit turned up—it gives her the prettiest look! and her mouth is—well not small, you know, but nicely-shaped, and sweet and full of expression." ("Better be full of potatoes," thought Garnet vulgarly). "She knows how to talk, too: she is full of life and fun—you would enjoy talking to her yourself—and she can laugh the prettiest sweet-toned laugh you ever heard. 'I Jove, it makes me half-crazy to remember. Her face, sir, is the picture of innocent, lovely mirth when she

laughs. Her eyes fairly sparkle then. She has the loveliest eyes—I swear I never saw such eyes.”

Here Hartley was vehement enough to attract the attention of Doctor Bobus sitting forward of the gun. “Eh, Mr. Hartley?” said he, “What’s that? Our captain doesn’t allow any loose allusions to eyes.”

The surgeon was thinking only of a favorite naval ob-jurgation, more pointed than pious, which the captain had forbidden; but Hartley misunderstood the doctor’s meaning, and was much embarrassed.

By and by he resumed, in a lower tone. “She is the sweetest, gentlest creature! By heaven, if I could pass my life with her, I would actually resign.”

Will thought that love made his old friend rather forgetful, and wondered ruefully what he himself would do for an associate in such a case.

Hartley went on: “If I could go away knowing that I should never see her again, that our fate would always divide us in this world, I could still be happy if I knew she loved me.”

It was Garnet’s turn for silence now. He was thinking, “Hal has it bad this time. Worse than that Gibraltar girl, by a long jump.”

Hartley went on again mournfully: “To think I’ll never see her again after we sail—and she’ll be sure to marry that fellow, that conceited young fool of a Martin.”

“The Doctor ’ll hear you,” suggested Garnet.

“I could see her preference clearly. She showed it in her looks and her familiarity with him—confound him! she was as cold as ice to me the last time I went.”

He alluded to a call he had made after the episode of the flower. Mary had been questioning her heart as to the cause of her agitation on that occasion; and the answer was so unsatisfactory and contrary that it troubled and unsettled her mind, and she went at once to the extreme of virginal shyness and self-defence. The new feeling of love was not yet strong enough to overcome that maidenly in-

stinct. She was not yet far enough advanced even to feel any pleasure in the discovery of Hartley's sentiments. So she met him with a coldness which he interpreted to mean anger at his conduct on their last parting; and she, seeing how he felt, permitted him to continue in error, to avoid explanation.

The friends sat a long time, Hartley gazing at nothing in a general westerly direction, and Garnet absorbing nicotine and naval tactics together. The drum for evening quarters called them away at last.

After the crews had been mustered, and the reports made, and the retreat beaten, and the two officers had laid aside their swords in their state-rooms, Garnet came to Hartley and asked if "there wasn't another young lady at Mr. Dewhurst's?"

"Yes," replied Hartley, "Miss Terrell. But why?"

"Why—I thought I had heard you speak of another one," answered Garnet, looking a little foolish.

Hartley thought he would repeat a small and very old joke—asking the other to go ashore with him. "Will, come ashore with me and call on the ladies. You'll have a fine time."

To his great surprise Garnet stammered a half acceptance. "If I thought it would be the thing"—said he, "but I'm not invited."

"Pshaw, you old fish!" answered Hartley. "Come along. Mr. Dewhurst told me to bring any of my naval friends to his house I pleased, and Miss Ma—Miss Dewhurst has several times wished to see you as a rare specimen in fossil ichthyology."

"I shouldn't care to be shown off as a queer fish," said Garnet.

"Don't be a shark, and snap my head off, Will. That was all gammon, of course. Come with me and pass a pleasant evening. With a sensible woman like Miss Terrell you'll feel at home."

"Well, I'll go," replied Garnet, "but what can I wear?"

"Pooh ! are you a woman, to want clothes ? Put on a clean shirt and your best uniform."

When they were ready, Hartley gave Garnet a careful inspection in the privacy of his state-room, tied his cravat in a better knot, and pronounced him *comme il faut*.

They waited till the boat was reported, and then went straight on deck to avoid the remarks of inquisitive mess-mates. Finding McKizick on deck, they obtained permission to leave the ship, descended the side into the waiting cutter, and in a few minutes were walking up Broadway together.

CHAPTER V.

ON the way, Hartley asked Garnet curiously why he wanted to call. Garnet said it was because he had been thinking seriously of the inconvenience and loneliness of a single life, and thought it was every man's duty to take care of one woman, and so he had concluded to marry.

"And so," said Hartley, "you've come ashore to make your choice to-night. You had better propose, too ; for the time is short, and you won't see her again for two or three years. Will, you wanted to see for yourself what my Miss Dewhurst was like—that was it."

"Just so. Maybe if she suits me I'll propose to her in your behalf."

"Very probable !"

"I'd better, I think."

"Why."

"My lad, you've got your yards a-cock-bill before Good Friday. You are going off to sea in the blue devils without ever having asked her. You are not of much account yourself, Hal, but may be she has bit at your buttons."

Hartley, half-offended by his friend's light tone, made no reply, and failed to receive the intended impression.

When they arrived at the house, Isabel and Mary came down, the latter stating that her parents had gone out for

the evening. Hartley was pleased to see that Garnet showed no annoying embarrassment, and that he commenced a conversation with Isabel easily enough. Beyond that he did not see him or hear him, or think of him, the whole evening through.

He was enveloped in Mary's atmosphere, which hid from him all things but her : he was intoxicated with her beauty and her personality, which seemed to surround him like the strange fragrance of some new flower, to permeate and thrill through him with a magnetic quality; he was joyful as a lover is when with her he loves, and because he is with her ; he was sad because he was so soon to lose sight of her, and because his hopes were in the inverse ratio to his love. It was not strange that their talk was wandering and desultory, for Mary, too, was affected by an unavoidable though unknown longing, and she too was sad. She did not yet know that the Flying Fish was to sail so soon, but was thinking of her own early departure with her parents and cousin. Mr. Dewhurst had arranged to take them to Philadelphia for a short visit at a relative's house, and there had been talk of their all going South for the remainder of the cold weather. Mr. Dewhurst suffered from rheumatism, and was of half a mind to try the effect of a change of climate. The day had been spent in preparing for their journey, then more of an event than now.

So while Hartley sorrowfully thought, "I may never see her again," Mary pensively reflected that she would not see her dear friend any more for years. This feeling made her kinder in manner to Hartley than at their last meeting, but she was still minded to keep him from talking of personal matters. Hartley was in a pitiable condition, possessed at once by love and jealousy, and fear and sorrow. Meanwhile Garnet watched them both.

At last Hartley resolved to tell Mary of their approaching departure, and to bid her farewell, feeling that he could not suffer longer at that time, and would not endure such a trial again. He told her, and a pleasant hope arose into Mary's

mind—she might meet him again sooner than she had expected. She at once informed him of their own approaching trip.

“Why didn’t you tell me before that you were going?” he asked, surprised.

Mary did not remind him that he had no claim to be foretold her movements—in fact, she did not think of that at all.

“Oh,” she answered gayly, “we had only talked about it—like a very improbable thing, you know; and it is so dangerous for father to travel in the winter. We finally determined to go only yesterday morning at breakfast.”

Hartley made no more question, and after a few moments, Mary went on: “Perhaps we may go further still.”

“Where?” He asked it so carelessly and lifelessly that she made him guess. After several very wide conjectures she said, smiling: “We have only talked about this, but it may turn out like the Philadelphia trip. While we were discussing the difficulties of that we were all the time finding ways to avoid them—we made excellent preparations without knowing what we were doing. Maybe it is so now.”

“Why,” said Hartley, “do you wish to go to this place so much?”

“Oh, I long to go. I have wished for it, and hoped for it, ever since I was a little girl, and read—” she stopped, smiling.

Hartley felt the influence of her change of tone, and smiled responsive. “What was it you read?”

“Such a charming book, Mr. Hartley. If you ever come across it, don’t fail to get it. You will enjoy it, too—but I don’t know that it will be so fresh and good to such an old traveller as it was to me. You will take my advice though, won’t you?”

“Certainly, only you will have to tell—”

Mary interrupted him roguishly. "Then it will do father so much good. All the doctors say so."

"The doctors!—the book!—" ejaculated Hartley in bewilderment.

"Oh, no," said Mary, "the travel and change of air."

"Where is he going?"

"Why, with us, *of course*," she replied with a pretty pretence of surprise.

"And you are going with him, *of course*," said Hartley, laughing for the first time in a fortnight. Garnet was all attention. "I give it up."

"What makes me feel pretty sure we shall go is that father has long wanted an opportunity to look after that part of his business, on the ground," said Mary.

Hartley looked incredulously delighted. "You don't mean to say that you are going to the West Indies this winter?" he asked.

"No; only that I think it likely we shall all go," she answered.

It was such a relief to Hartley to find there was a chance of meeting Mary, that he almost lost control of himself. "O, I am so glad," said he earnestly; "I shall see you—perhaps." He instinctively reached out—for what? actually to shake hands with her—and Mary let him—and Hartley held on to her pretty hand while he went on, "But when are you going? and where are you going?"

Mary first remembered herself, and disengaged her hand with blushing confusion, yet gently, as she replied to him: "I do not know when we are going, for nothing is settled yet; but I suppose we shall stay in Santa Cruz and the Havana longer than anywhere else. Most of father's vessels go there."

"Then," said Hartley, "I shall be sure to see you. It will not be *good-by*, but *au revoir*."

Mary now felt as if she must be cool again, to atone for the momentary betrayal of the truth of which her looks and voice had been guilty.

"Yes," she said carelessly, "maybe so. I should think though, if you are going to look after pirates, you would hardly have much time to pass in port."

"Well, we must have a little," he answered.

"Oh, you cannot bear duty *all* the time, you hardy sailors," said she, attempting to be sarcastic; "you must be amused a little."

Hartley took it quite in earnest. "It is not that," said he, "but we have to take in prizes, and go in for provisions and water, and sometimes look in for suspicious craft. We have to eat and drink—and I think there are—I need more to—I feel—"

He was about to say something to the point, or, at least, was trying; but she broke in provokingly, "You feel as if oranges and bananas would be nice after eating salted meat and those hard square biscuits for a week or two—is that it?"

Hartley was nonplussed to have his feelings transferred from his heart to his stomach in such an abrupt manner. His heart was in his throat before, and she was trying to place it still higher—in his mouth. He hardly knew how to begin again, but was too much in love to wish or dare to be impatient. Then he remembered the rose.

"Miss Dewhurst," he said, "I must ask you to forgive my conduct in the hall the day I—when I threw your rose down."

"Say no more, Mr. Hartley, you are forgiven," was the rather stiff reply.

He persisted. "I was a—I cannot forgive myself so easily—I—"

"Oh, Mr. Hartley, please let it pass," urged Mary, suddenly changing her manner and fearing that his agitation would be observed.

"Mary," said he, with a tremulous, unnatural voice, "I saw Mr. Martin put the rose in your hair. Oh—if I might have such a privilege!"

He meant, of course, that he longed for the intimacy

which would permit such privileges, and he wanted her to make some sign which would give him either her freedom, or permission to ask for it; but his remark was unanswerable to such a girl as Mary, and she accordingly kept silence. She was very pale, her bosom tumultuous, and her hands trembling; but Hartley could see nothing. His love was blind, as usual, and he still feared to put it to the test. So he asked her a question to which, on a common occasion she would have refused all reply, but which she now answered eagerly, as a relief to her maiden dread.

"Mary, I beg you—I implore you to tell me if Mr. Martin is—if you—if he is anything to you?"

"Oh, no," she said, "not at all—that is, he is a very dear friend of mine."

"No more than friend?" he insisted.

She shook her head.

He might after this have got his courage to the sticking point, but just here Garnet, who had actually been making talk with Isabel for some time past, "so Harry might get through" as he said to himself, put in, to his friend's regret.

"Hartley, I have discovered that these ladies are tired. They have been packing trunks to go to Philadelphia. And I've just remembered what Miss Terrell drove clear out of my mind—I've the middle watch."

"Why am I guilty?" asked Isabel.

"Must I tell the truth?" said Garnet.

"Certainly," said she.

"Because," replied Garnet gallantly, "I have admired Miss Terrell and her conversation so much that admiration filled my mind to the exclusion of everything else."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Hartley. "There spoke the chivalry of Old Virginia. Blood will tell, Miss Terrell. He isn't used to speaking his mind that way, but the cavalier in him came forward for once. That's the first compliment of his life, I honestly believe, Miss Terrell, and you ought to frame it, and hang it up as a trophy."

Mary had recovered herself enough to say quietly—

almost confidentially—to Hartley, that she didn't think Mr. Garnet so very diffident, after all. Her tone and manner, and her avowal about Martin, had made him very light-hearted.

Then they had a little pleasant bantering chat, all four together, said good-by, and separated with two of the party feeling very much better than they had felt at meeting.

And as the two friends walked down to the landing in the still streets flooded with moonshine, their boot heels glinting on the cold steely stones, the fresh, crisp air biting like champagne, and cigars burning, Hartley felt as if he were floating along. He "seemed to tread upon the air," as John Keats puts it; but the real feeling is one of an entire absence of legs. He talked to Garnet with boyish lightness of heart and openness, and Garnet was so uncommonly sympathizing, that a shrewd acquaintance looking on and hearing, might have suspected that it was the first faint attack of a fellow feeling which made him so wondrous kind.

CHAPTER VI.

LET the reader, dismissing previous localities and persons, imagine himself on the south coast of Cuba. Let him come with me to look at shores on which our characters lived and fought, and waters over which they sailed, searching and hiding, pursuing and fleeing. On this lovely south coast fate threw them together for a few short weeks—weeks that afterward seemed as years, in remembrance of their crowded and thrilling incidents, their myriad sensations of fear and hope, of love and hate, of sorrow and of joy.

Cuba is an island of brilliant natural beauty, of loveliness so deep, in season, "as almost to upbraid the eye with happiness beyond desert;" and in no other part is this more displayed than on the rich south coast. It is a land of

palms, of white beaches, of short mountain rivers, of ever-greenness. The sky is a swimming soft blue, the twilight horizon a melting green, the sun a faithful, flashing silver ball. The sea-waters everywhere are of that intense transparent blue, that color of delight, which we Northmen worship in our tropical messenger, the Gulf Stream.

There are multitudinous islets and keys of sand and of coral; pale coral reefs beyond number glimmering milkily through their clear covering of water; thickly-scattered shoals—all those obstacles which pirates loved about their haunts. These dangers make the sea dark to all honest navigators, but the pirates sought them out. They loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.

The coast abounds in little bays, lagoons, and creeks, with the entrances often deftly hidden by nature's hand. Sailing along a mile from shore only the best glass and the keenest trained eye could detect the slight break in the line of bordering palms and the long beach; but run in closer and the entrance is revealed. Perhaps a hundred yards back the bay or river mouth bends suddenly and parallel with the coast, and once around the bight, your very spars are invisible from the offing, hidden behind the fringing trees.

By this time our vessel of imagination has come—for she sails swiftly—has come with you and me to the spot I have wished to show you. Look around.

To the south, nothing but “the fresh, the ever free :” to the east, a rocky, wooded promontory tapering to the water's edge at its end, which seems to point across a narrow strait at a large low key. Mark well that key—El Cáyó del Pescadór. Between our place and it lie innumerable rocks, reefs, and shoals.

To the west the long shore-line bends in and out its strip of white beach and wall of waving green, till both fade away in the horizon. The islets and shoals seem to cease just in front of us, and only commence again about two miles further to the left. The Cobre River runs out

just behind that little point of trees, and the force and freshness of its waters have prevented the working of the coral insect.

To the north a mountain range uprises, dim and blue and far away. The country between is broken, and immediately in front of us hills extend clear to the water. In front of us and, a little to our right, lies a rounded hill, with only one break in the slope toward us—a kind of clean step down of twenty or thirty feet, as though along a certain line the soil had sunk sharply, leaving all above that line intact.

Do you see that shining object on the edge of the little bluff. It is shaped like a rock, but appears peculiarly white. It looks like a big whitewashed boulder—and that is just what it is. You observe that we are running straight toward the land, and with so many rocks and shoals ahead that it seems to you a risk even for a craft imaginary : but fear nothing. Watch when the bare stem of that solitary tree half up the hill comes into line with the white boulder.

"Weather braces! Look sharp now. Brace in! up helm!" You can now see, over the fore-castle, a lane of clear water with many a threatening rock and reef on either side, extending to the shore, yet half a-mile away. "Steady as you go, and mind the range, helmsman." Listen to the musical surf moaning in soft bass an invitation to fiercer winds to come and give its waters strength to roar. Do you catch the lapping wash of the little waves on the rocks by which we are gliding? It is all right. "Mind the range, helmsman!" Here is a close shave. You might toss your hat on the rocks on either side, and that one on the left comes still nearer us under the water, if you did but know it. Yet on the darkest, wildest night, with a fair wind, any vessel drawing less than sixteen feet can run over this track if two lamps be put accurately on the range.

Look to the eastward at the confusion of rocks rising raggedly above water. Would you think anything could

get in that way? Anything of less than twelve feet draft can, in the daytime, with a hand at the helm that knows the channel. The natives of this part of the coast say that only two men living know that channel—Big Ben and Captain Hackett, famous names about here, I assure you.

But you ask where we are going. I can't stop to tell you just now, friend, but you shall know directly. This is the only dangerous place we must pass. See that slight break in the shore line? Watch it.

"Helmsman, round that big rock as close as you can shave it and bring her head north by west. Lee braces, fore and aft! In spanker sheet! Down helm! Brace up!" Ah, now you see something—but you don't know just where we are going, after all, eh? You see, at least, that we are running for that creek-like bit of water ahead. Wind will be too far forward? Oh, no. "Stand by to shorten sail! Hands by the anchor!" Now we are in the very mouth of this seeming creek. "Luff and keep her in the middle of it, helmsman! Haul taut! shorten sail! square away! aloft and furl!"

Look about you now, friend. With no sail on we are gliding through this narrow channel by our previously acquired motion, our yards nearly touching the trees on each side. Pretty, isn't it? Still you can't see where we are going? No more can I. "Hard a starboard!" Ah, you see now. "Let go the anchor!" Here we are.

A lovely place it is—you are right. Sloping hills clothed with feathery woods on the north, the east, the west; and steep, tree-covered bluffs on the south. Palms nodding about you—almost bending over your head. Sandy beaches—bright sunlight—deep shadows—brilliant greenness reflected in glassy green water. It is a mere little oval haven, not more than two hundred yards long nor wider than a hundred yards at the broadest place. No sound but the faint moan of the surf over the rugged wall. So you think that in such a spot one could remain forever with only those he loves, "the world forgetting, by

the world forgot." Scarcely, dear friend, for there is a colony here now the world would like to forget, if it could, and its settlers would probably conspire together to make you unhappy. Yes, in this still, sweet, Sabbath-like retreat. But you do not seem to notice that pretty vessel—there—close to the west end. Do not the beautiful surroundings become her elegance of art? That is *La Hembrilla*, the little craft we saw over two friends' shoulders as they leaned out of a port one evening at sunset last winter. She is owned and sailed by Captain Hackett of this port : mates, James Arrowson and Benjamin Markley, the latter usually known as Big Ben. What place is this? This is *The Hole*, inhabited by the worst nest of pirates on the south coast.

Now, friend, assume a garment of invisibility and let us go ashore. Other clothing might invite reflections upon us. Come along.

See how still and swan-like *La Hembrilla* lies! Everything is neat, but evidently not a soul is on board. She has mounted a gun since we last saw her. Hillo! there is somebody. See that darkey jump into the dingy, and scull ashore. How easily he rolls the oar. How the brawny muscles play in his bare right arm, and how his grease shines in the sun. See where he lands—by the hut—you hadn't noticed the hut, either? He has gone in—we'll step ashore and follow him. Come right in, he can't see us. He is gone—out of the back door after him! Yes—a pretty stream—down the bank! here!—walk on these stepping-stones in the water. Yonder he goes up the brook—keep him in sight. How dark it is here with the trees and bushes meeting overhead! Do you hear that noise? A laugh, wasn't it? There—the darkey is gone—hurry up—no matter if the stepping-stones have given out—the water isn't over an inch deep, and it is clean. Besides you could not get up these high banks, and if you could, the close thicket would force you back. Here's where I saw him last, at the mouth of this little brook.

Come to the left and let's try it. Hear that talking and singing? Yes, and a violin. 'Ssh! still, now. Bend the bushes aside gently—come on quietly—Ah-h! here they are.

Come a little to one side—we are right in the path. Now let us see what is to be seen.

Quite a lively spectacle. The sides of the brook valley have been getting steeper and higher as we came up, and here they are changed to rich gray bluffs, sixty feet high. The valley itself stops right yonder in a wall as sharp and steep as the side walls, so the thing resolves itself into a *cul-de-sac*, in which we have the rogues at bay. Not quite, either, for in the north wall appears a narrow, rugged cleft, with foot-marks on its steps of wedged-in rocks. There's another way out, evidently. Yonder's their water supply—that silver thread of a fall in front of you: There goes a darkey woman now with a bucket. See how she catches the whole of the little stream in which we waded—convenient pump, isn't it? What a help these scattering trees are! They grow with bare stems, and with their leafy tops just about as high as the edge of the surrounding bluffs, as though nature had tried to roof in the glen. The roof leaks enough sunshine to make the pattern of the carpet quite diversified, however.

The dozen houses strung around near the foot of the bluffs in an irregular semicircle are the Quarters, and very comfortable quarters, too. Captain Hackett brought part of them down in La Hembrilla last winter, every piece prepared for its place and painted. He had them made on contract, and got them a bargain. Oh, a thorough man is Hackett; he means business. He knows that his men are of a class that can't endure to lose all the domestic pleasures, and so he has made them comfortable, as far as possible. That accounts for the presence of the ladies you see—certainly, the men's wives, of course. Hackett insists on his men being married. Won't let a bachelor sail with

him. The fact is that men leading such a life of trial and temptation, need something to keep them steady.

The open space in front of the houses where you see the happy dancers, is the public hall of the colony, where all hands meet for business or pleasure. It is pleasure this time. What's in the barrel? Water, I suppose. The captain is a strict temperance man—no liquor for him. That's a fact—the stream is quite near at hand—anyhow it can't be whiskey on tap, for the ladies are drinking out of the tin cup.

Yes, the ladies are rather strangely dressed. Rich silks, soft muslins, shiny satins, and one—that one with Mr. Markley—Ben Markley—Big Ben, you know—has an ermine cape over her shoulders. Where they buy, the goods are better than the milliners, I suppose. That would account for the simplicity of the styles. No stockings on—pshaw! you shouldn't observe so closely—so she hasn't. The ladies have a rare taste for color, anyhow; you might almost imagine yourself at a New York ball, if it were not that most of them are black and yellow women. Merely tropical freedom, friend; their ideas are different from ours.

See that rather moody-looking person coming this way. Fine sailor-man that, Mr. James Arrowson of England, Captain Hackett's first mate. He is of a somewhat retiring disposition—perhaps that's why he leaves the gay party. Some say he is cross occasionally. Let us trust not. He seems a little unsteady in his gait—must be affected by the heat. Ah, that handsome quadron is coming after him. Looks as fierce and beautiful as a tigress, doesn't she? There—she leads him away. That must be Mr. Arrowson's house he has entered. His wife? Oh, no; probably only his cook.

Rather a mixed set of nationalities in the colony. Let us see—English, Yankees, Danes, Irish, Portuguese, Mexicans, Spaniards, negroes, mulattoes, and more you can't name. Yes, and dressed almost as gayly as the ladies are.

That house with two rooms is Captain Hackett's cot-

tage, and there he sits on the door-step, smoking a cigar. He loves to see his people enjoying themselves. The Spanish girl?—where?—oh! sitting back in the room. I see her through the window now. Pretty, child-like thing! His wife? well, no—merely his housekeeper, but they are probably engaged. A fine young woman, too. Captain Hackett is particular about his housekeepers, so he obtained this one at an early age from one of the best families in Cuba, and trained her up in accordance with his own ideas.

How they have been enjoying themselves all this time. But look! there seems to be some trouble. Two of the men are angry—fie! they are swearing at each other in Spanish. What, drawn knives! fighting! Why does no one stop them? There goes the captain—he will attend to it—and there goes Big Ben. Ah! too late! he's down.

We had better go, friend. It is really impolite in us to be spying in this way. I hope the poor fellow wasn't much hurt, after all. But how strange the ladies didn't seem more alarmed.

CHAPTER VII.

“**L**OOK alive with the mizzen-royal yard! Capsize the lower lift and brace, you lubber you! Are you ready forward?”

“All ready, forward, sir,” answered Garnet, ringingly.

“Ready with the main, sir,” reported Hartley quietly from the starboard gangway.

“What do you say with the mizzen?” asked McKizick.

No reply from the agitated Mr. Briggs, who is dancing about nervously on the port side of the quarter-deck.

“What have they got in their luff, *now*, Mr. Briggs?” asked McKizick, half-sadly, half-severely.

“Lower lift—top-gallant yard”—gasps Briggs. Then,

in a thundering bawl, "Mizzen-top, there ! Smith ! go up and put on that lift."

"Aye, aye, sir," from the top captain, who springs to obey ; but before he is fairly in the rigging, Briggs reports :

"All ready with the mizzen, sir !"

"Stand by !" roars McKizick. "Let fall ! sway across ! hoist away ! haul out ! Lay down from aloft !"

Like magic at the words, the trembling light yards drop from the vertical, square, and at the same time a cloud of new yellow canvas envelopes the spars. The jibs and staysails travel up the stays, and the other fore and aft sails out on the gaffs, with a rattle and run ; the foot of each topsail follows out its bowlines, till the sails hang in pendulous folds shading the decks ; and the rigging is bedotted with nimble men, coming down from aloft like all-crazy.

McKizick walks aft to the captain. "A little better, I think."

"A good deal better," replied the captain.

"I'm not satisfied with it, sir. I want to keep at it awhile."

"As long as you wish, Mr. McKizick ; only don't tire the men out—and recollect the officers' dinner can't begin preparing till the hands are piped down."

"Shall I send your cook and steward below, sir ?" asked McKizick.

"No, sir ; never till the hands are piped down."

Back went McKizick. "Pipe furl sail, sir," said he, addressing the boatswain, Mr. Thick, a stout, short, yellow, poek-marked individual. "Koo—week—week—week," goes the pipe ; "week—week," answer the pipes of the boatswain's mates. Then, "Ko-o-o-o—we-e-e-e-e-k ! Koo—we-e-e-e—hee-e-e-e !" they all go together in a prolonged, piercing squeak. Nobody pays any attention, for all hands heard the order and look upon the pipe rightly—as a preliminary of undoubted, though hard-to-explain usefulness. Then the large-lunged three take in a

big breath apiece and bawl loudly and drawlingly—as if suffering from gigantic stomach-aches “All—hands—furl—sail!”

“*Man the gear!*” orders McKizick shortly. “Mr. Briggs, see the mizzen t’bowlines tended this time. *Keep down, for’d!* You captains of the tops, keep your men in till they’re ordered out. No stealing, dy’e hear. Lay in at the word, furled or not furled, and down from aloft together. Let’s have no noise aloft.”

“*Stand by to lay aloft! Aloft, light yardmen!—aloft, topmen! aloft, lower yard men! Haul taut! Clew up! Haul down!*” The rigging is darkened with the racing blue-jackets, and, as they seem to fly aloft, in come the sails, vastly reducing the amount of canvas exposed to view. In a marvellously short space of time the men are clustered in dark knots at the slings of the yards, awaiting with eagerness and tense muscles the next command. They know McKizick will not stop now to criticise, for that isn’t his style. The order comes—“*Lay out!*” and out they dart, swifter and more reckless, on the slender foot-ropes aloft, than we on hard ground. Every man’s hand seizes the government property—the loose sail—quicker than a politician could grab, but no one ventures to lift a thread. “Furl away!” roars McKizick, and the sails roll up instantly. A faint humming sound pervades the air.

The captain of the main-top cannot restrain himself, thinking from his glance across that the foe is ahead again; and he calls out in a voice of pent-up agony released. “Up bunt-jig on deck!”

“Silence in the main!” comes quick and sharp from Hartley; and then, to the top captain’s delight:

“Ready to lay down in the main, sir,” just a second before Garnet reports the fore. Briggs is only a trifle later.

“Lay in! down booms! lay down from aloft!” and down they tumble, arriving on deck flushed and excited.

Lewis, captain of the fore-top, a slim, tall Yankee, active as a cat, pushes aft in the gangway through the clustered groups of seamen who are criticising the furl. He is jealous of the main's having for once beaten him, and means to take all the consolation he can get. The main-top captains and a few seamen are discussing the furl in a low voice, and chuckling over the victory. Honest John Brown 2d, who hailed the deck, is especially triumphant.

"You Brown," says Lewis, "when everything is workin' nice aloft, you hadn't oughter holler out that way. Your fellers thought it was the first luff at 'em, and jumped as if the devil kicked 'em. Didn't calc'late *you* had got the deck. That's what made 'em work so fast and so dam bad. Jest look at that furl now—and come look at the fore."

"That furl's good enough," replies Brown, after a critical squint aloft. "Good as your'n. I'spect I better keep my jaw-tackle belayed, though. First luff'll be down on me like a gull on a minner."

"*Brown!*" comes a call like the instant fulfilment of a prophecy. Poor Brown's face falls. It is McKizick calls him, and the tone is far from sweet. "*Step over here!*"

"Told yer so," whispers Lewis, gliding forward to keep clear of the thunder.

"Don't the officers attend the gear to your liking?" asks McKizick satirically.

"Lord, sir, it warn't that. I was afeard the fore would beat us, and it jest slipped out like an eel from your fist," replies the penitent.

"You'll come out of the main-top like a star from the sky, if you don't mind." Then McKizick added, in a lower voice: "I don't want to break you. You're a good top-captain in every other respect, but I can't be always after you about singing out aloft. Look out for yourself."

"Aye, aye, sir," answers Brown, backing out with a lively assurance that the first luff meant business.

The men were eager, and McKizick still unsatisfied.

He meant to make the crew efficient, and knew the value of port practice. So, unmindful alike of the sad looks of poor Dularge, whose tender body was tired and whose heart not in the work, and of the periodical appearance above the after-hatch combing of the head of the marine officer, who liked his meals regular and foresaw a delayed dinner, he went on to send down the light yards. All his brief cautions and explanations he gave before the men left the deck, saving a great deal of noise and worry afterward. His officers had been instructed not to hail aloft, except when absolutely necessary, and the top-captains made signs to attentive watchers below instead of keeping up a chorus of yells. McKizick and the captain agreed in thinking that such noise was superfluous, and sounded too much like orders travelling in the wrong direction.

The exercise went on till even McKizick was content.

"Well, captain, I think they're doing well," said he.

"Very well, indeed, replied the captain.

"Shall I pipe down, sir?"

"I think you had better, sir."

Then the long-drawn pipe released all hands, and Dularge ruefully relieved the first luff, to stand out the watch. Dularge was master, and thought it a shame to have to keep a watch in port, but Captain Merritt thought otherwise.

The ship had now been waiting for her charts, in all a month, and advantage had been taken of the delay to make the crew proficient, both at the guns and aloft. Continual exercise had gone far toward accomplishing this end.

Hartley and Garnet both relished their professional work. Garnet, because duty was always his engrossing thought; and Hartley, because he too was conscientious about giving work for his pay, and because he was brimful of life and hope since last he saw Mary. He was impatient to see her again, of course, but he found the drills good to work off that impatience. His enthusiastic excitable nature made him take an interest in passing

work, deeper than Garnet's cool appreciation. He would warm to it, become wrapped up in it, and for the time would be oblivious of all beside. He took a livelier joy in success than did Garnet, and bad results depressed him more. Garnet had been working a long time with unfailing good-nature on this mercurial quality of his friend's, although he could not but see the uselessness of trying to change the original character of the man.

How strange it is that people generally do not recognize the fact that it is pains in vain to try to alter character. You can't change a man by pecking at him : the stuff is in him, and the best you can do is to get him to cover it up, or make it smooth. The diamond is a rough pebble in its native state, by patient labor reaching polish and brilliancy ; but so long as it is a diamond, it will be hard enough to scratch anything else, and will possess all the other essential qualities of the rough stone. So with a man. And as fire reduces the stone to a cinder and dissipated vapor, so only mighty forces, perhaps only that of death, can really change a man. That resolves him into ashes and floating soul.

Hartley had not seen Mary since the evening he had called with Garnet. He was hungering and thirsting for her as only the genuine absentee lover can. He had written to Mr. Dewhurst in the lofty fashion of the day, informing him of his aspirations, and had received from that gentleman a reply which amounted in a few words to a permission to take her if he could get her. Here is the letter Mr. Dewhurst wrote him from Philadelphia :

"LIEUTENANT H. HARTLEY, U. S. N.

"SIR : I have received your communication of —th inst., informing me of your wishes with regard to my daughter. I can offer no objection, believing you to be a young man of good principles, able to support my daughter properly ; and hoping that, in case of your marriage with her, you would retain enough of your present feeling to keep her

happy. I shall therefore, with my present knowledge, interpose no obstacles, but I shall not attempt to influence my daughter in your favor. It has long been my intention to let her choose (among worthy objects) unbiassed by my wishes or judgment. My family and myself leave here next week in the brig Bonita for Santa Cruz, where we contemplate a residence of some months. We shall probably visit the Havana, also, before our return.

“I remain, sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“JNO. DEWHURST.”

So it was settled in Hartley's mind that he was to see his dear again, though he had somehow felt as if that were pretty certain ever since his farewell. Strangely enough, he did not now worry himself about the possibility of missing her or of finding time for only a glance at her.

Mr. Dewhurst was not half willing to let Mary go, and concealed Hartley's letter even from his wife, lest she might influence Mary in the “young man's” behalf. He grumbled internally at the idea of losing her; for she was an ornament to his house, the pride of his heart, and had a great deal of his affection. Still he could not but admit to himself that Hartley was a very suitable son-in-law, and he reflected that as Hartley's wife, Mary could pass the time of long cruises with her mother. Altogether Hartley was about the least of necessary evils. Mrs. Dewhurst was now a more interested friend of the lieutenant's, and Isabel, putting out of her mind the slight she had received—she would have valued it far less if she had ever been in love herself—did what little she could in wisdom, to help his cause along.

All Mary needed was letting alone. With all her innocence and ignorance, she had an intuitive inherited penetration, which, more than lack of opportunity, had kept her out of love. Martin's chance was poor, for he had always been too intimate and brother-like : others had no

chance at all, because Mary saw deficiencies of mind and soul in men, which put them beneath her standard and the worthiness of her affection. But do not think she was consciously measuring and gauging the men she met. She thought very seldom of marriage, and never of what it would be to pass her life with particular persons. So when Hartley came along, with his high motives and enthusiasm, his handsome appearance, gallant bearing, polish, and devotion, he simply dawned upon her in an atmosphere and in a light of love. She, too, now looked back with pleasure—a pleasurable emotion, which came in her musings alone—and forward with joy, though some dread was mingled with the expectancy.

Hartley had bad quarter-hours by this time. Now and then he would get into a cold sweat of doubt, full of fears that he had been mistaken in his deductions. Garnet rather liked these short fits, for they gave him considerable relief. Ordinarily his friend took every occasion to get him alone, and go off into raptures. Garnet bore them with patient fortitude, feeling well-assured from his one evening's observation, that his friend was in a fair way sooner or later to obtain his Dulcinea. He was not so sure as to her suitability to "his boy" (as he sometimes called and always thought Hartley), but he believed Miss Terrell would have made a good wife. He even wondered if it were not possible that he could have married such a woman as that, himself; and he more than once sat down to think out coolly, in *calculus* style, a solution of what life would be with such a woman sharing him and demanding his attention in every relation. He always reached a negative result, or went off into infinity, because his *data* were insufficient; but somehow the singular attraction of the problem would demand a reconsideration.

The charts came in a few days after the exercise we have described. There was a hurried laying in of stores for officers' messes, a bringing off of books and other shore luxuries, a penning of farewell letters to sweethearts and

wives; and then, on a bright morning, with the wind in the northwest, the pilot came on board, and McKizick got the ship under way in style. They ran down the bay and out past the Hook without accident.

Hartley was almost the only one who seemed perfectly buoyant and happy, for while nearly all were either indifferent or had ties more or less strong in the land they were leaving, he longed for the isles of the south and the rapid flight of time. When the pilot left them, remarking on the fine manner in which the men worked, Hartley felt as if he had a start.

With good weather and fair winds they made southing rapidly. Everything seemed to be working together for good to Hartley, but poor Martin was attending very closely to business at that time, trying to forget.

When the crew came on board, and after they had been berthed and assigned to their separate messes, the captain made them a little speech. He had all hands called on the quarter-deck, and spoke short and sharp as follows :

"Well, my men, we're all aboard to serve together for some time. To *serve*, mind you. Everybody on board, myself included, has to obey his superior officers. We have surrendered our liberty, and all our time and work belongs to the United States. I shall obey my superior officers, and you will have to obey me and my representatives on this side of the quarter-deck. Just bear that in mind.

"I don't like to punish my shipmates; but when I am forced to do it, I do it well."

"I mean you shall all be as comfortable as the duty we are going on will permit, and when there's a chance you shall have all the liberty on shore possible. I feel it my duty to warn you against the danger of excesses on shore in a hot climate, but I suppose you will act as sailor men commonly act.

"I don't like shirks, and I don't want the honest men

aboard to screen them. The man that lies to save a shirk's back isn't much better himself. Let the petty officers remember it is a part of their duty to look sharp after anything of the kind. Pipe down, sir."

The men dispersed thoughtfully, and appeared to be talking it over.

A man-of-war must have a despotic government or be useless in the supreme hour of need. Effective combined action—that is to say, efficiency—must come from the plans of one person who has power to carry out his plans. This is the history of the world everywhere, and this is why Navy life is only a higher kind of slavery. The people ashore who pay taxes to keep their navy good and efficient, should remember this. Their officers have a great deal to bear, but are content to endure it for the country's good. With the feeling to meet on shore among his fellow-citizens that he is a would-be aristocrat, with a life at sea of danger and exposure, separated from his family, unable from the requirements of his position to save up any money against his old age, and trusted with so little power as to be in constant dread of failure in controlling the turbulent spirits over whom he is placed, the United States naval officer has a hard time and a far from enviable place. The feeling of the people who have, through their Congress, destroyed the discipline of the Navy by humanitarian legislation, is a good feeling; but it is misapplied.

A number of persons signify their willingness to guard the honor of the nation on the high seas. As the country does not wish to pay much money the force is small, and to be useful it must have a fine discipline, all of which is seen by the force itself. Hence its members virtually say: "We do agree to sacrifice to our country's service, as needed, our comfort, our hope of future wealth, our children's welfare, our health, our lives; and, that our fellow-citizens may enjoy a more perfect freedom, we also give up our liberty and our will."

The country certainly ought to grant to such servants at least the satisfaction of confidence : it ought to trust them with the means needed for their own discipline. If the power be abused, the offender should, by all means, be severely punished, but his whole class should not be included. Trust the service with the means of its own governance, and punish thoroughly those who use the power wrongfully.

Thoughtful men will not fail to reflect that it is impossible to carry out Christianity in the Navy. The Navy is in the very fact of its existence, unchristian ; it is an instrument of revenge, of unforgiveness, of death to the offender. As long as nations must fight, as savages remain savage, it will, however, be thought necessary. It should be regarded rightly, as a weapon, and the people should stop trying to make it such a weapon as will be consistent with the teachings of Him who would not defend himself, but commanded Peter to put up the sword. They have swallowed the camel, let them not strain at the gnat. In plain English, since they have fought in the past, and mean to fight in the future, let them prepare properly. Let them not, sticking absurdly at trifles, fool away the force of the Navy in humanitarian legislation, but let them go on to make it *efficient*, by giving officers the means to govern the crews.

At the time of which we are writing things were different. A few days after sailing, the master-at-arms brought to the mast a man who had been in his hammock when his watch was on deck at night. The captain of his top had missed him, after he had answered to his muster, and certain of his topmates deposed to seeing him slip below. Captain Merritt did not hesitate, but had all hands called to witness punishment at once. After a dozen blows had been well laid on, he had the man unbound, and spoke kindly to him, telling him his fault was now expiated, he was as good a man as ever ; and urging him to take a

fresh start, and get a name on board for a smart faithful seaman. As it happened this man was reclaimable ; and he afterward not only avoided giving trouble, but distinguished himself for diligence.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE first night they struck the Gulf Stream, Hartley had the watch on deck. The pleasant warmth of the air, the bright moon and its multitudinously changing glitterings upon the waves, the sky without a cloud, and happy thoughts, all joined to make him patient of his watch. The sails needed no attention, and force of habit kept him scanning the horizon for any threatened change of weather, without thought of what he was doing. So his mind was left free to dwell upon the favorite subject—the incomparable she—Mary.

What a queer and funny thing is a man in love, anyway ! He loses his dignity almost always, his wits invariably, and does things which would warrant the world in locking him up. But the good old world knows its children too well, and is satisfied with laughing at them during the period of this short soft derangement. Mother World looks on it as a disease—a sort of ridiculous measles. The older you have it, the worse for you.

Hartley fell involuntarily into an old trick, and began composing a sonnet to his mistress's eyebrow, in the form of a serenade, thinking in the intervals of the rhymes, how he would gently steal at night beneath Mary's window in Santa Cruz, and there pour forth his full soul. He imagined the scene : a fine large moon—"a good fat moon" as clever Billy W. used to say—looking on with mellow approval, vines clinging to her balcony and swaying in the breeze, "glimmering, murmuring mystical waters near, and my love alone to hear !" So ran his serenade. He sings his

best, and no accident occurs to annoy—not even a guitar string snaps. He ends, and glancing upward he sees the snowy curtain parted, and down flutters a—what? a flower? might miss that in the dark. A handkerchief? Well, no—he remembers the use of the handkerchief, and even angelic girls have a cold in the head sometimes. He repels the handkerchief with disgust. A little bunch of violets breathing the language of love, and tied around with blue and white ribbons, colors of faith and purity. He would be sure to see the white. And he would smell it—h'm—quaff its sweet odor, and place it in his pocket—his bosom, and go away content. And then—and then—and then. Well, what then?

But suppose Mr. Dewhurst should wake up and come to the window, and ask him in good English what the devil he was making all that fuss about. That would be embarrassing.

He was relieved from this strait by the appearance of Garnet coming up the ladder to take a turn with him on deck, preparatory to taking a turn into his bunk, and he found that during his soliloquy the ship had got half a point off her course, and the main-top-gallant studding-sail was gently lifting in the light air. Johnson, the quartermaster, had been spinning the man at the helm a yarn about Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones.

Garnet joined him, and they walked rapidly back and forth for a few turns, like beasts in a menagerie cage, in the customary manner of naval officers. When they once began to talk the pace naturally slackened.

“Those mids are queer creatures. I’ve been one myself, but I can’t quite understand ’em. They’re always surprising you, one way or another.”

“Yes, very.”

“Coming up the ladder in front of the steerage, I saw what was going on. One or two were pretending to study—Spanish, I suppose—but were a heap more interested in listening to the boatswain.”

"Is old Thiek in there?"

"Yes. They've got him telling stories about the 'Callypaykus'—Gallapagos he means—and they're drawing him out in a fine style. The gunner is in too. I heard him called 'Dry Bob,' 'Sly Bob,' and 'Idle Bob,' by those irreverent youngsters, while I was on the ladder."

"How did he take it?"

"*He* didn't care."

"He *has* a dry, lazy look about him."

"Yes, he's a queer fellow: but he attends to his business well. If he associates with those cubs, he must expect cubs' play; but it sounds unnatural to hear an old, gray-headed—"

A sudden roar of laughter came up the hatch from the steerage, and stopped Garnet's speech. They walked to the hatch rail to find out what was the matter. Evidently the steerage was enjoying itself, for the laugh went on, mixed with the crash of falling camp-stools and loud exclamations of "Go it, William, I bet on you!" "Hang on, Dry Bob!" "Call *him* *Idle* again?" "Five to one on Thiek!"

The rogues had got both boatswain and gunner to boasting of their past feats of strength and agility, and had finally led them into a wrestling match. Suddenly there was a great calm, and McKizick's voice arose. "Hope you're not hurt, Mr. Thiek, or you Mr. Harrison?" he asked, with apparent solicitude.

"Oh no, sir," stammered Thiek, who was the first to get breath, "a bit of a lark—that's all, sir—only the young gentlemen made a devil of a row—they might a' made less noise, I mean, sir—regular hurrah's nest."

"I am happy to see you remain, uninjured, sir," said McKizick, preserving his gravity, "and I am delighted to have such a valuable set of midshipmen. They have made you and Mr. Harrison young again to-night. But, young gentlemen, you must *moderate* your transports." With rising voice he went on: "If you think you can make a

monkeys' den of this steerage for your tricks and noise, you are mistaken—and you'll find your mistake—you will by—jimony! no more of this after eight bells!" There was a dread silence in the steerage as he walked away, but in a moment was heard the voice of the boatswain, grieved, angry, and restrained. "Now Mr. Larkin, and you, too, Mr. Young, I suppose you feel nice to get me to make a fool of myself that way." A subdued laugh from the irrepressible and undaunted youngsters was the reply.

Hartley and Garnet laughed a little too, accustomed as they were to the pranks of midshipmen, and then resumed their walk.

"Dularge has been trying to explain the principles of dead rise to Briggs—you know Briggs is hunting up information everywhere—and Robbins overheard a part of what they were saying. After awhile he went into the paymaster's room, and I heard him growling to Pay that we line officers thought ships came in everywhere. 'There's Dularge out there,' says he, 'telling Briggs all the ships will appear bottom side up at the resurrection.'"

"Resurrection?"

"Yes—he caught at *dead rise*, you know."

"Ha—ha—ha.—"

Silence for a while.

"What are you thinking about to-night?"

"I was just wondering if the Dewhursts would get a vessel to Santa Cruz in time to be there when we are."

"I should think that all settled from Mr. Dewhurst's letter to you. They are probably afloat now. But you seem to take it for granted that we are sure to go to Santa Cruz."

"Why yes: don't you think so?"

"Don't know. Can't tell till we get to Key West. I suppose we shall though."

Silence again for a few moments, while the soft wind fanned their faces, and the waves glistened, and the parted water murmured beneath the bows.

"Wish the breeze would freshen," said Hartley.

"'Twill before morning. What is she doing?"

"Six, two."

Silence again. Garnet broke it.

"Harry, a perplexing thought has been on my mind."

"What is it?"

"You know the theory of the trades, how the easting is obtained by the wind's constantly arriving at points on the earth's surface whose velocity of revolution is greater than its own?"

"Yes, I know."

"Well, that set me to thinking about the difference of centrifugal force on the equator and at places away from it. The radius of revolution differs according to latitude."

"Yes."

"And each point of the surface requires the same time to go around—twenty-four hours. The theory is that the attraction of gravity is enough and a little to spare to balance the centrifugal force that tends to throw a fellow into space like a stone out of a sling. There's a little in favor of gravity—just enough to make a man firm on his feet. But if gravity is always the same and toward the centre, I should think—it looks like bodies should weigh more as we get toward the poles, where the centrifugal force becomes zero."

"Yes."

"I don't understand it. Maybe the resolution of the forces will do it."

"Yes."

"Now it looks as if gravity must act toward the axis and with diminishing force toward the poles, instead of uniformly toward the centre. On the last supposition a person would get heavier and heavier travelling north, and at last would hardly be able to lift a foot—like a lump of lead, eh?"

"I should think she might, perhaps," replied Hartley abstractedly.

"She? Who?"

"Why, Miss Dewhurst."

"Ha-ha-ha."

"I beg your pardon, Will. My wits were wool-gathering."

"In the thick ringlets of her clustering hair, eh?" said Garnet good-humoredly. "Well, old chap, I sympathize with you. We may be happy yet."

"Will, love on earth is a fallen spirit—"

"I'll tell Miss Mary that," put in Garnet.

"A fallen spirit, I say. Once it was all pure, now it is weakened by carnality. Love has the instinct of striving to regain his old home in heaven, and he uses the only means he sees possible to return. Men are his bearers, and he tries them all. Nearly all carry him well for awhile, but each tires at last and puts him down."

"In that you sacrificed the truth before your figure."

"Shut up.—Will, being in love is like going up in a balloon. Sometimes we burst and drop. Sometimes we come down in a sea of troubles, or of cold water—maybe, hot water—but we generally settle down easily on solid ground and get back to where we started—indifference."

"O, philosopher! stay with us awhile, since you have descended. Your last remark is unusually sensible—for you, Hal. I *might* have made it myself."

"So might a pig."

"But I didn't and wouldn't be likely. I cheerfully take my part with the pig. We are not guilty."

They walked up and down a few minutes longer, and Garnet said he believed he would turn in.

"What's your hurry? Don't go yet," said Hartley.

"I've the morning watch to stand, you know—and you are in good company, any how, with Miss Mary."

"Well," said Hartley, "I only hope that wherever she is to-night she is in company with me."

Garnet left him hurriedly, muttering something to him-

self about wishing Harry would get through soon, he was no good now—and Hartley was alone.

He looked out on the water lit up by the sinking moon in a broad golden road to the west, and admired its beauty. The moon went down and thoughts of doubt crept over him with the darkness. He tried to shake them off, unsuccessfully: he roused the watch up for a pull at the studding sail halliards, hoping that the stir would dissipate his vapors; but that also was ineffectual. Fears that his love was not returned, fears of not meeting Mary according to his previous expectations, fears for her safety on the passage, fears for his own—strange fears for him—beset him. Gradually, however, his mind worked off the old ground on to new, and from the field of love went to that of belief. Here Hartley had always found trouble and pain. To-night he wondered at the doctrine of the redemption of souls. He thought that surely the Father could save his children, if he would, by a simple exercise of power, because they were his children, He, their Father who loved them. He thought he ought to save them because He had made them subject to fate, and because everywhere in the world they were looking to Him under some guise, instinctively, as their Father. He thought it would be unjust of God to hold men responsible for the circumstances which surrounded them and by which He did mould them. He thought it too cruel an action to ascribe to Mercy to make myriads of human beings with a capacity for suffering, knowing that vast numbers of them would suffer eternally. He thought that perhaps sin itself was intended as a means of education. Is it right, he thought, to hate sin as the preachers bid us. Or should we see in it some good, and a part of the Divine plan. Sin may be the necessary experience of souls in the growth of the world, the rough mixture of cold winter's snow and frost and wind which must come before the spring of the hereafter can make buds bloom, or the eternal summer can ripen any fruit.

He thought that if Christ be really God and mediator, as

is upheld, his death ought to be sufficient to atone for all the sins of all men, inasmuch as it was the death of God. He thought that in another state, men or souls might come to a knowledge of truth here withheld, and learn to repent, enduring a punishment meet for their earthly sins meanwhile. Then he wandered farther back and doubted. What is God? Perhaps the principle of motion, life, and reproduction, existent of itself, unconscious but eternally working. The thought made him sad. Perhaps he is the soul of men, living a part in each—a Brahma. Perhaps after death, each soul returns to Brahma, the soul of all, whence it came. Like the waters of Abana, which flow in beauty, making the land alive about them; which are lost in the outspreading of a black morass; which, by evaporation, return to the common source of all streams—the bosom of the air. The conceit pleased him, and led him off into working it up into poetic form; so that he forgot his doubts, though they remained as they must remain to us all, unsolved by reason. So interested was he in the new occupation that he did not hear the quartermaster droning to the man at the wheel his yarns about Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones, nor the reports of the midshipman who hove the log, and to whom he gave mechanical directions.

Midnight came before he knew it. The bell was struck, the watch was called, and in a few minutes Briggs came reeling up the ladder, drunk with the heavy sleep of youth. Hartley was still fresh enough to remain on deck awhile, and kindly talk Briggs awake. Then he sought his state-room and his three-foot bunk, to forget Mary and all the world in deep sleep.

Next morning after the exercise at the battery, the three quartermasters came together a little abaft the mizzen-mast, and sitting down on deck in the warm sun, went to work on a new ensign. The three had chosen this cosy spot for their headquarters in good weather, because there was no gear near them which required handling and made

it necessary for them to move about. Johnson (Ap Jones) usually did the talking for the party. He had seen a great many things in his wanderings over the seas; and being in addition endowed by nature with voluminosity and a pretty thick skin, he possessed all the requisites of a sea talker. He had dubbed their party the *Sociable Club*, and the name had already become attached to it among the crew; so whenever the three came together, somebody was sure to remark on the Sociable Club's having met.

Drawing out needles and thread from their diddy-bags they began to stitch up the long-lapped seams with a neatness and dexterity which bore witness to years of practice. Presently, when the work was fairly under way, Ap Jones, twisting his long neck to bring the spittoon in range, commenced, "That feller Jackson is lucky this cruise."

"Who's he?"

"That foretop-man that got licked yesterday."

"What's the luck in a lickin', Ap?"

"They say the man that gets the first dozen never gets it no more."

"It's a lie if they do, for I was licked twice't in one ship."

"Where was that?"

"When I was ornery seaman in the States frigate. Old Quillbelly was the first luff."

"Well, that doesn't prove nothin'. A young man like you gettin' twice't licked in one ship is no sign. Surprisin' if *you* didn't get more lickin's than there is reef-points in all the taups'les. 'Twixt old Quillbelly and you with your sky-larkin' boy tricks."

"I never was catted but the twice't, Ap Jones. What are you talkin' about me for, you old growl? I bet my head to a pumpkin your back has been like a Cadiz winder oftener than twice't."

Ap was suddenly very busy threading his needle. He began again:

"When I was in the Ohio liner-battle-ship round the Horn with Thomas Ap Catesby R—"

"Take a turn with Thomas Ap," broke in Thompson, "I want you to tell me how many times you've been at the gratin's."

"It's little enough politeness ye've got, anyhow, Thompson. If the angel Peter was to open the hatch o' heaven a crack to let you slip in edgeways—I don't mean to say he will, for it's bloody sure he won't—but jest s'posin' he *did* forget himself, you'd never stop to make him a bow."

"Devil a bow. I'd go below. But what's all this pal-aver about? You axed me and I told ye: now turn about's fair play."

"Young man, you've got a sight to learn more'n your seamanship, and that's but jest begun."

"Burke, Ap would jest as lief tell, but he's had such a sail burton-fall o' cattin's in various parts o' the world, he can't remember the half of 'em. Give him a month to recollect 'em and it'll take him the rest o' the cruise to spin his yarn."

Johnson merely requested Burke to hand him a roll of bunting, and went on working without either reply or irritation. Indeed none of them thought of being angry, for they were merely chaffing in rough sailor style.

Presently Ap: "When I first shipped in the sarvice, I was a scrap of a youngster, no longer'n a whale's hind leg. I went out in one o' them old revolution brigs, and I was stationed to hand the fore-r'yal. Lord love ye! I was no more use on the yard when I got there than water in grog. You see I was disp'inted in findin' the sea different from what I expected, and sort o' sulky like with my monkey's allowance, more kicks nor halfpence, and bein' all hands' messenger boy, and I didn't know much nohow, for I'd never been aboard nothin' better nor a coaster, nor higher nor the futtock riggin' in them, and that none too often. Besides, you see, I was not very smart and lively as a *boy*, nohow. So I ketches it all round. I had a trick o' standin' still so long I couldn't get out o' the way quick

enough at last ; and whoever it was would fall over me, not bein' much higher nor a shark's foreleg, and come down by the run. Then I'd get kicked and cussed for a lubber with his leg in the ground—or maybe if 'twas the hands runnin' away with a brace they'd go on right over me and nigh stomp me to death. I learned soon enough to jump for that, but if 'twas a man I'd a grudge against, I'd stand still sometimes and let him go over me, in hopes, ye see, that he'd break his darn head on an eye-bolt or a shot-rail or somethin' else hard enough ; and the minute I felt him goin' I'd call on the captain of the afterguard on the lee side o' the quarter-deck. Sometimes they'd recollect me a watch through, but most generally they'd forget. Now the first luff was a powerful observin' man, and he noticed how I was up to gettin' safe under the lee of the officer o' the deck till the squalls was over, and he suspicioned I throwed the men o' purpose. He never said nothin' to me though, till one day I tried it on him. He come up the cabin ladder from a palaver with the old man, and jest as he set foot on the quarter-deck—looking aft, you know—the lee fore-taups'le sheet parted. The sail begun for to flop and bang—it was blowin' like hell—and he turned round quicker'n a shot and started to run for'd to see what was the matter. I never know'd what made me do it, but I jumped right across his bows, pretendin' to be goin' to the weather-rail, jest as he come a flyin' past the main-mast, and me bein' somethin' shorter nor a whale's foreleg—what's the matter o' you Thompson?—and bein' somethin' shorter nor a whale's hind leg, he naturally fell over me. Laws-a-land ! You oughter see him ! Fust he took a rank sheer to port, then he went down by the head, then he fairly grounded and went on his beam-ends. When he got up there I was a settin' on my stern sheets, tryin' to look like I was hurt, and nigh bustin' open with the laugh I had to hold in. He said nothin' to me then, but about an hour afterward when the captain come on deck to see who was hollerin' it was me. He give me a dozen, and told me

he would like to see me improvin' on the fore-r'yal yard. And it was surprisin' how much faster I learnt after I had that lickin'."

"Served you right."

"Sartinly. Nothin' makes good sailors but knowin' they'll get licked if they don't tend to their dooty. That feller Jackson—I heard him tellin' the armorer's mate he 'lowed to keep his watch on deck after this."

"The old man ain't goin' to play with the hands. Reckon he told the straight yarn that day we went into commission."

"Shut up—Mr. Hartley's comin'." A minute later he continued: "There's the kind of officer I like, now. Jest as straight-for'd as a taut main bow-line, and knowin' well his business and never a rough word to a shipped man even when he's mad at 'em, and hard-workin' and rough when needs be, but ready to rig out fine as a dandy and speak all the furrin languages to the furrin kings when they comes aboard, or to dance and talk sweet to the handsome ladies. He's an officer all over. He looks more fat and quiet-like now. Reckon he's got his gal, Burke?"

"Spec so."

"Mr. Hartley reminds me right smartly o' Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones when I was on the west coast of Africky in the Somers."

"I reckon Mr. Garnet jest as good an officer any day, for all he's so shet-up in his shell, clam-fashion. Anybody can see he tells Mr. Hartley what to do."

"Now you're talkin' about somethin' you're acquainted with."

"Me! What?" said Thompson, with a surprised air.

"Clams. They mostly is raised on the farms down 'long P'int Judy."

"I never dug a clam on P'int Judy P'int."

"Anyway, you know more about *them* than you do about officers. Anybody can see how Mr. Garnet keeps his

mouth shet and his years open tryin' to larn by watchin' Mr. Hartley."

"They mostly hangs together."

For awhile the three were still, but Johnson soon broke silence:

"Thompson, you axed me quite brash about my bein' licked, why didn't you ax Burke?"

"I feel like Burke can tend to his business without none o' my help."

"Come, now!—you're afraid he'll snap you. That's what makes you feel so bashful-like—as the lady said when she married her third husband."

"Ax him yourself if you want to be interferin'—I've got no curiosity."

"I haint' neither. Burke, was you ever licked?"

"Tend to your own business, Ap Jones."

Ap began a series of mingled complaints and apologies, to which Burke paid no attention whatever. He soon broke off suddenly, by saying, that he bet Mr. Hartley was a good 'un to fight. He has fit his doo-il many a time."

"I hear the ward-room officers talkin' over their pipes by the port round-house the other day when I went to set my scouse-pan in the galley, and they was sayin' Mr. Hartley wouldn't be axed to fight no more because he always shot his pistol in the air."

"In the air! He couldn't hit anybody *that* way."

"No more he wanted to."

"What made him fight doo-ils then, if he wasn't goin' to shoot back?"

"'Spect he was afraid they'd think he was afraid if he didn't; don't you reckon, Burke?"

"'Spec so."

"Well," said Johnson, "I be dam if I let any dam fool stand up and shoot at me, and not try my best to hit him. 'Taint fair. I didn't think Mr. Hartley would 'a done that way."

"Every body to his taste, as the old 'oman said when she kissed her cow."

"I recollect a doo-il they had in the Ohio liner-battle-ship when I was in her and Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones was first luff. I was down in the gun-room."

"The gun-room!"

"Yes, percizely there. One mornin' I was lashin' up a midshipman's hammock—"

"Shet up, Ap. Whoever heard of midshipmen in the gun-room?"

"The ship wasn't in commission, I tell ye, and all hands flected up. She was jest a receivin' ship. The quarter-masters had the steerage and the mids the gun-room—there warn't no flag-officer in her at all. I was a-lashin' up the hammock and listenin' to two of 'em quarrellin'—they was a mate and a midshipman. The mate had been devillin' the middy a long time, shakin' his clews and wakin' him up at five bells after he'd kep' the mid-watch, or easin' down his lanyards till he was all doubled up in a bight and most uncomfortable, or lowerin' his head clean down to the deck and leavin' him to wake up when convenient—which it most generally was in a short time—and the middy had been gettin' madder and madder. He wouldn't pitch into the mate with his fists, 'cause the mate was a man grown, and he know'd he get no joy out o' that, but this mornin' when he wakes up and finds the mate shakin' his clews, he jumps out in his shirt tail as bold as brass and walks up to him. 'This has got to be stopped, sir,' says he. 'Well, stop it,' says Mr. Mate. 'I'm not strong enough to give you the dog's thrashin' you deserve. I challenge you to fight me with some other weapons—swords, pistols, knives—anything you please.' I see the other mids crowdin' round and lookin' sort o' queer like, and I jest went on lashin' the hammock as slow as I know'd how, for I know'd there was something in the wind. The mate, he was sort o' took aback and holds off at that, which makes the mid all the more anxious and pushin'. At last the mate, says he,

‘Well, then, if you will, you young fool, I name pistols, and Mr. Marshall is my second if he’ll act for me. We’ll fight it out right now—across a handkerchief if you like.’ That was a little too sudden for the middy, and he turned white as a scrubbed hammock, but he was too plucky to back out, so he asks another middy to be his second, and goes off and writes on a piece o’ paper and folds it up and hands it to his second. The mate he never wrote a word. Well, they put ’em up on the settees, a matter o’ four fathom apart, and told ’em they was to wait for the word and not to shoot till a white hankercher was dropped. The middy was awful white, but he was jest as plucky as the devil. I tell you, it was still in that gun-room then! Says he to the mate, ‘I’m in earnest about this here, I’ll shoot you if I can,’ and the mate he jest laughed at him. When the hankercher dropped neither of ’em shot. The middy had only half-cocked his pistol, and couldn’t pull it off, and the mate was a-waitin’ on him, and coverin’ him with his pistol, kind o’ shakin’ the pistol at him, and a-cussin’ him. First I know’d, *bang!* the mate’s pistol went off, and sure enough the middy dropped. I see a red place on the front of his shirt, and him a-layin’ on the deck. He hollered out, ‘Shoot again! and put me out o’ my misery.’ ‘My God!’ says the mate, ‘is he hurt?’ They all run up to the middy and tore open his shirt, and there was a bloody raw spot about as big as a half-a-dollar on his right breast. The little Pill came in in a minute, and felt of him and twiggled the joke, and says he ‘The ball has lodged in your liver. I feel the bulge of it. You’re a dead man.’ You see it was soft tommy bullets the pistols was loaded with.”

“Well, I’ll be ——!”

“Spec you will, Thompson. And, sir, that middy never see the joke they played on him till four hours afterward. He couldn’t understand what made ’em laugh at him so. And he sat down and eat a hearty breakfast the same time he thought he was dyin’.”

Johnson commenced another yarn, but seven bells

sounded, the sweepers were piped, and they were obliged to put away their work. Nobody had ever reached the end of Johnson's stories, or was able in them to separate truth from fiction.

Still the Flying Fish sped southward. Night and day she glided smoothly onward, till at last, one afternoon her dry anchor dropped off Key West.

The captain went ashore in the gig immediately, leaving orders for all hands to remain on board.

The place wore a deserted appearance. Not a vessel of war was in the harbor, though they had expected to find several of the squadron. While the officers were wondering what could be the reason for their being thus alone, the captain returned. The gig was at once hoisted by his order, and in a minute more, everybody was electrified to hear the boatswain pipe, "All hands up anchor!"

The captain sent for Briggs, and told him to take the deck and get the ship under way. He wanted Briggs to learn a naval officer's duty—to be ready for any emergency—and he thought rightly that Briggs would try harder to prepare for emergencies if the possibility of their occurring were thus impressed upon his mind. Briggs had kept a deck watch with tolerable credit, but looking upon getting the anchor as a first lieutenant's duty he had not expected to be called upon for years, and had not given the duty close attention. He was a good deal confused, but the captain did not mean to let him make a failure before the ship's company. He therefore stood at the young officer's elbow, and made necessary suggestions. All went well till just before the anchor was reported aweigh. Briggs had forgotten to have the jib cleared away, and when the captain suggested the advisability of so doing, was so much confused that he misunderstood.

"*Clear away the flying-jib!*" he bawled.

The forecastle-men stared at him a moment in surprise, and then darted out on the head booms, obedient.

"I said the jib, Mr. Briggs," remarked Captain Merrit;

but Briggs was too much agitated to be able to hear. "*Man the flying-jib halliards!*" he ordered.

"The jib, Mr. Briggs," said the captain in a louder voice, "and—"

"*Anchor's aweigh, sir,*" sung out the officer of the forecastle.

"*Very good, sir,*" replied the infatuated Briggs, "*Clear away the flying-jib down-haul!*"

"*Don't set that sail, sir!*"

"*Hoist away!*" and in spite of all, up went the flying-jib merrily, and under that useful sail the Fish was cast, while the men grinned, and the officers smiled, and the captain looked very blank. Poor Briggs! he lived to be a respected and useful officer, but never to the day of his death could he be reminded of the time he cast with the flying-jib without feeling hot and uncomfortable.

They sailed out of the harbor so lately entered, everybody wondering why they left and where they were going. However, Captain Merritt made it known as soon as possible, for he was above annoying his officers with useless petty mysteries.

"I suppose you are all disappointed in not getting your washing done and fresh provisions in, Mr. McKizick!"

They were standing aft by the cabin skylight after the hands were piped down.

"Well, yes, somewhat; though it's a small matter," replied the first lieutenant.

"I was sorry," said the captain, "to have to weigh immediately, but I found orders awaiting us on shore at the consulate to make no stoppage whatever. Here are the orders." He opened a big official document.

"First, a description of a very fast topsail schooner called *La Hembrilla*, built in New York last fall and winter, and now cruising in these waters. She has already done an immense amount of damage—she is commanded by that scoundrel Hackett, who has so often dodged us. There seems to be no catching him, but now we're to have

a try. We are to make it our especial business to get information of this craft, follow her up, and capture or destroy her. The flag-officer has heard that she runs around the south coast, and hides in or near the Cobre."

"There's plenty of places to hide in, there, sir," said McKizick, "I'm afraid it'll be like looking for a needle in a hay-stack."

"We have the best part of three years in which to pull the hay to pieces, and split the straws open. I only hope we may succeed early, for it will be very hard on all hands, and I have no liking for a worn-out ship's company. You must remind the officers of this, Mr. McKizick, and put them on their mettle to endure a good deal. Make them feel that we are going to improve the knowledge of the coast, and help the charts, even if we don't catch the schooner."

"Aye, aye, sir; I'll 'tend to it. You'll need no spur for Mr. Garnet and Mr. Hartley, sir, for they are as faithful as—"

"As faithful as my first lieutenant, and that's paying them a high compliment. But I thought Mr. Hartley was in love."

"So he was, but he appears to have shaken it off by this time."

"Just as I hoped. He won't be discontented and moping over his duty, as I feared."

"Where are we going now, captain?"

"Across to Matanzas, and along down the coast stopping at every port to make inquiry. Then to Cape Haytien and around Hayti by the south, running up to Samana, and stopping at discretion. Then along the south side of Porto Rico in the same way, and over to Santa Cruz. We are to provision and take in water there—the commodore gives us ten days for that—and then to run down the south coast and cruise mostly off the Cobre. Of course, if we get on a hot scent we shall not stop to provision and water ship."

"Are we to have company?"

"No, Commodore Porter says he can't spare another vessel, as much as he would like to, and he expects us to do double duty. By the way, Mr. McKizick, the men always feel better when they know of what is coming. My steward is in the pantry now; suppose we go down and talk it over while we look at the charts. Mind, that La Hembrilla ought to carry at least a ton of doubloons." The captain's gray eye twinkled as he started down the ladder thinking of how the steward would serve as an unconscious messenger to carry the next wonderful galley news.

CHAPTER IX.

THE system of piracy at the time of which we are writing was worthy of having applied to it the word *system*. Warned, by the vigilance and activity displayed by the American cruisers, of the necessity of equal watchfulness and address in making their depredations, though not yet sufficiently punished to make them see the lack of profit in their adventures, the pirates had now made themselves more dreaded than they had ever been before. Merchant vessels were seized in places deemed safe, when least dreaming of danger: perhaps at their anchorage in some of the less frequented ports: perhaps by a boat expedition when becalmed off the shore in broad daylight: perhaps by a piratical vessel immediately after leaving the protection of a man-of-war, and almost before her sails were below the horizon.

Nowhere were the pirates more troublesome than on the coast of Cuba, more especially the north coast, the southern passage being less frequented by the rich merchant-men the buccaneers loved to meet. Using small craft of light draft and good speed, the enemies of commerce could lie in wait for their prey, hidden themselves from passing ships, but watching eagerly for a situa-

ble vessel to attack. When the predestined one came, it was quick work to slip out to sea, slay, capture, plunder, make prisoners, destroy the useless prize by fire, and again dodge back into hiding. In case of pursuit by a man-of-war their more thorough acquaintance with the dangerous coast, joined to the light draft of their craft and much practice in escaping, gave the pirates great advantages. They would boldly thread their way among shoals and reefs where the man-of-war durst not follow ; and soon the hospitable shore would open to receive and protect its children.

The pirates hunted in bands of from ten to one hundred in number, each gang having its recognized commander, and confining its operations to a particular strip of the coast. That is to say, its homeward operations ; on a cruise the whole sea was free to all. The lesser bands sometimes combined their forces for attacking a stronger vessel than common, but with the larger parties combination was unnecessary. Yet all had a fellow feeling, and stood ready to do one another a good turn. There was among them a constant communication and interchange of courtesies. Did a fine ship escape the gang which first tried to seize her, the word was passed along the shore immediately, and, unless she had a strong fair wind, for hundreds of miles she would be eagerly looked for by other parties, each of which stood ready to take advantage of any opportunity which fortune might render. And so she ran a gauntlet, in which the penalty of slowness, carelessness, lack of courage, over-confidence, or any of the ordinary accidents of the sea, might be destruction.

The methods of conveying intelligence were various, and suited to different cases. Sometimes a boat was sent at night, sometimes a man rode over with the news, and, on urgent occasions, a bonfire on a hill told the story quickly. Certain it was that in one way or another information seemed to pass along the line of the north coast as electricity flashes along the wire.

There was, also, correspondence between the headquarters of the gangs and the nearest towns, in which they usually had an agent. From these towns provisions and news of the rest of the world were received, and to them goods were taken for disposal. Certain classes of people in the towns were as glad to hear of a good capture as the planters were to know that another load of slaves had been landed.

It is a well-known fact that the pirates and the slavers alike received support and sympathy from the Spanish residents, and it is equally well known that Spanish officials systematically connived at both wicked pursuits. With such great natural advantages in front, and with friends and a market at their backs, it is not surprising that the gentlemen of the coast long did well.

When a merchantman was taken, the customary course of the captors (in case she was a large one) was to collect every portable thing of value which she contained, carry this property on shore with the prisoners, and burn the ship. Cruelty was not frequent after the fight, though it was sometimes resorted to in order to induce revelation of the place in which valuables had been secreted. After landing the passengers and officers, they were directed to send for ransom. The crew were usually turned adrift in an open boat to look out for themselves. The prisoners were guarded until news of the ransom was obtained; in a few cases actually being confined in a town jail, officially imprisoned on some trumped-up charge sufficient to give the alcalde a plausible excuse. He, of course, got a share of the ransom in payment for his services.

In case no ransom could be had, the prisoner would sometimes be shot, but was usually conducted blindfolded a distance of some miles into the country, and turned loose to get to a seaport as best he could. When a handsome amount of money was received, the pirates always dismissed their guest with vast politeness, a guide on the road,

a pass to protect him from other gangs, and a *Vaya V. con Dios*.

The goods captured were divided among the men in shares whose size had been fixed by long usage: and the new owners of the merchandise sold it as opportunity offered to their middlemen in the towns, at very low prices. Captain Hackett's custom had always been to buy the goods himself from his men. He gave better prices than the agents, which was one reason for his having, up to the time of this account, possessed unusual popularity and influence among his crews. He shipped his honest purchases to the United States in regular form, entered them properly, paid the duties like a good citizen, and made enormous profits. But he had capital and business enterprise, which his brother chiefs had not. Their gains were almost invariably squandered in dissipation as low as was that of the men they commanded.

Captured treasure was an exception. Nearly all the gangs, impelled by a very strange though common instinct, buried it as fast as obtained, in one place, known to the men of the band only, and guarded by them with an affectionate and fearful secrecy. Each man knew the danger of his comrade's vengeance, and each looked forward to a day when the division of the treasure would enable him to live in ease and safety. With such a mine of wealth accumulating there was the less motive to be saving of daily gains. In point of fact, few of the hoards were ever equitably divided among those who had laid them up; for death fast lessened the number of heirs, and the treachery of later years robbed the robbers of the proceeds of their robberies.

Hackett was one of the most successful of the freebooting commanders. He carried correct business ideas into the work, and being a keen, sharp man, with a judgment and knowledge of seamanship on which his men relied, he prospered well. It was he who developed the ransom system. He found it only occasionally resorted to, and then but for

persons of consequence : he made it a regular, profitable part of his business, and his success led to its adoption by nearly all the Cuban bands. Now that the thing was so frequently practised, the old difficulties and delays had been greatly lessened. Routes for intelligence and prisoners had become fixed, official acquaintance made, fees established ; and the whole thing was dropping into routine.

The outrages and cruelties of the past were now more rare. Blood was not often shed, except in the attack and capture. Though occasionally the tiger nature of these low, abandoned men would assert itself, still they had generally come to regard themselves as enemies of property rather than of life. Such was the piracy in Cuba at this period.

CHAPTER X.

" Where, over fig-tree and orange, in tier upon tier still repeated,
Garden on garden upreared, balconies step to the sky,
Ah, that I were—far away from the crowds and the streets of the city,
Under the vine trellis laid, O my beloved, with thee."

IT is about half-past eight in the morning of a clear delicious day, warm with the warmth of spring in the tropics. Hartley and Garnet sit by the open bridle-port of the Flying Fish, smoking the after breakfast cigar, and looking out at the scene before them. The ship is lying to her anchor in Santa Cruz harbor, so still that to our two friends, after feeling the send and swing of the sea so long, she seems to be motionless.

The hands have just been piped down from bringing ship to anchor, and it is the meal-hour. The men are all on deck, puffing reeking navy tobacco in clay pipes, and discussing the work to be done, and the chance of liberty on shore. The other ward-room officers sit somewhat abaft our two friends, and are occupied similarly to the crew, except that they smoke good Havanas, and speak of shore as a certainty.

"Will the captain stay his ten days out?"

"Don't see how he can get in provisions and water, and give each watch twenty-four hours in less time."

"That's so—and we need a rest after such a round as we've had."

"I don't suppose a man-of-war ever did move more rapidly."

"Ten ports in two weeks."

"Hardly fair to say ten, for at three places we only hove to and sent the boats in, and at two we anchored outside."

"Going ashore to-day?"

"Yes—I suppose so. If I'm not back by four, keep my first dog-watch, will you?"

"Yes. What makes you speak in that careless way about going? I thought you were all anxiety to get here."

"I hardly know why, Will. I'm surprised to feel so listless about it. I suppose I've been anxious so long, I'm no longer able to take any interest. I'm more than half miserable to-day."

"Maybe Miss Mary isn't here."

"She's here, I know."

"How?"

"I don't know how I know it, but I feel sure she's somewhere ashore yonder."

"That's a queer sort of knowledge. I've heard of it, but I can't say I ever had any myself."

"I know she is here."

"Well, why should you be miserable then? It's just what you've been wanting. Here you are head over heels in love, and longing to be taken. And there's the very charming young lady only waiting for the chance to take you, if I'm any judge. You've no right to be miserable, Hal."

"I'm not so sure about the acceptance as you are. It's true she showed some preference for me in New York, but she is not the kind of a girl to fall into unchangeable love

in so short a time. I'm afraid she has half forgotten me. Her father didn't regard me with any too much favor, I know by his letter.

"No fear she's forgotten you, my dear fellow. Your position is a good one, you are rich, and a good-looking boy, and you were very plain-spoken in your actions toward Miss Mary, so that she certainly knows your chief merit of all, which is loving herself. Hold your head up, Hal, and go at it like"—he was about to say "Like you did at Gibraltar" but mercifully changed it to "like a man."

"She isn't a girl to be influenced by money and navy buttons. You are very wrong if you think that of her."

"Pshaw! all of them are, more or less. It's only natural."

"I mean to do the best I can, but shall make no offer without some plain encouragement. I don't care to be anybody's fool for nothing."

"Right you are."

"But suppose I see clearly there's no use in speaking to her. What a prospect for the future! That's what makes me wretched."

"What?"

"It would take all the motive out of my life."

"Oh, no. Honor—duty—usefulness. Won't you always acknowledge them?"

"Yes, old boy, and friendship, too. Forgive me for forgetting that. With my old-time friend aboard, I'll be better off jilted than some are married."

"You're right, though I say it that shouldn't."

"Still, it will be pretty rough, Will."

"You haven't asked her yet. You talk as if it were a settled misery."

Hartley had nothing to say. Garnet went on; "Hal, I wish you could be more equable in your mind. You are always on heaven's highest hill, or in hell's hottest hole. Three days ago you were brimming over with good spirits, so much so that everybody in the ship noticed it—just be-

cause you were approaching the young woman: and here you are to-day as doleful as the devil—because, I suppose, you've got as near to her as the ship can carry you, and you've only to take a boat to get nearer, and only to walk a bit to get nearer still, and only to knock at the door to get in, and only to ask Miss Mary, to have her say, "Yes, and thank you, too." "What did that boy say doctor?" he asked, raising his voice.

Dr. Bobus, who was sitting with the party further aft, replied that he came to report that a boat would leave the ship, for ward-room officers, at nine-thirty.

"There, Hal, there's your boat, you see. 'Take it easy, me boy,' as the Irishman said to the fellow that swallowed the live crawfish." So saying, Garnet resumed his half-extinguished cigar, and puffed vigorously to relight it.

They gazed awhile in silence out of the port at the lovely picture it enframed of the harbor's mouth—the ship rode to a light sea-breeze, and Garnet enjoyed the fresh bright view. To the left a point ran out, helping to form the harbor. Its extremity rose in a little hill, connected with the island by a low neck of land. The hill was crowned by a clump of fine palm trees, in whose green centre there stood a tall, snow-white tower—a light-house. Bricks and whitewash seldom get together to produce a prettier effect than this was.

"See the light, Hal?"

"Yes."

"Pretty isn't it?"

"Yes, very."

"What does it make you think of?"

"Her."

"Why?"

"That shiny white is the emblem of purity."

"And your verdancy and freshness bring that out just as the green trees set off the light-house. Excuse me."

"I don't mind your nonsense. Then she stands alone

and without an equal to my mind, as the white tower does yonder to my eyes.

"Now I've got your interpretation, let me give you mine.

"Do."

"The light-house is a guide to port, and a welcome to the weary sailor—that's you. White is the color of peace as well as of purity. So we may say that the light-house is Miss Mary welcoming you ashore to peace and rest, just such as you need. The trees are palms, and I've always heard them called the symbol of victory. So all you've got to do is to go ashore, surround her, and take her prisoner, palm-fashion. I'm only afraid you'll be content to stop and grow up around her, you and your pickaninny palm trees, like them you see."

"That's a good deal mixed, but with a little practice you could set up for a prose poet. I'm much obliged to you though."

He smiled cheerfully at last, threw his cigar stump out of the port through the middle of the picture, and got up saying he must go below and get ready for the boat.

He went down to his dark little den of a state-room and made a careful toilet, putting on a civilian suit. While busy at that, a messenger came for Dularge from the captain. Dularge went on deck and Hartley heard the captain talking to him, through the open hatch.

"Mr. Dularge," said the captain, "I am not satisfied with our chronometer rate. You have noticed that it is gaining, of course."

"I—I believe," replied Dularge hesitating, "I believe I did, at Key West, sir."

"At Key West!" The captain's voice was surprised. "I don't see how you told anything about it at Key West. Anyhow I want a reliable rating, and I desire you to attend it while we are here."

Dularge answered, "Aye, aye, sir," in rather a dubious tone, and came below. When Hartley started on deck

Dularge was deep in a work on navigation, and was wearing a troubled face.

Before Hartley left his room Garnet came in and advised him to get through to-day somehow, assuring him he would be better off in any event, and Hartley half-promised. When the boat reached the shore, he at once separated from the officers who had come, and made inquiries for the United States consulate.

He took his way thither and was soon in the presence of the august citizen who represented the great republic at Santa Cruz. The consul was a little German Jew, who spoke such bad English that it was hard to understand him. Hartley made out, however, that the Dewhursts had been several weeks on the island, that they had lived the first week at the hotel, and that they had hired a house somewhere in town—the consul did not know where. Consul did not know where their address could be obtained, unless Messrs. Blank & Co. could give it—Mr. Dewhurst had business connections with that firm—but now he remembered hearing the resident partner was going over to St. Thomas to-day—maybe was already gone. Hartley got the merchant's address and hurried away. At the store the clerks could give him no information about the Dewhursts. The head of the house was going over to St. Thomas to-day and had gone home to get ready. He might have left by this time.

Hartley rushed to the merchant's house, but only to find him gone, as he had feared. None of the family could tell him where the Dewhursts lived, though they had all seen them out riding. Thrown on his own resources in this manner, Hartley went to the market and inquired there, thinking that information might have been left by the servants. It probably had, but that did him no good, for the mixed lingo of the market darkeys was wholly unintelligible. He walked back almost in despair to the store, found out where horses were to be hired, went and got one, and started on a systematic search

for his darling—a modern Quixote in quest of Dulcinea of New York. The ludicrousness of the situation never struck him, for he was too much worried, too much in love and earnest to think of anything but his ill-success and of Mary. So he rode on manfully and knightly through the streets, every now and then dismounting from his steed to ask questions, and fortunately avoiding an encounter with any of his brother officers.

After a two hours' hunt he found himself hot, dusty, and tired. His horse had walked of his own will some little distance out of the town; and Hartley, feeling vastly disgusted, stopped him, intending to ride back to the stable and give it up for that time. About to turn the horse's head and put his resolve into execution, he noticed at a little distance before him, bordering the road, several little cottage houses surrounded by trees and gardens. He pushed on again, thinking that one more attempt would do no hurt, and would take but little time.

So he rode on, looking at the houses on either side and hoping to see some person of whom he could make inquiry. He came to the central house on the right hand, a small, pretty frame building; examined the windows, as he had those of the other cottages and with like result, and passed on by. Between it and the next house lay a garden filled with bushes, plants, and vines. In front, next the road, were open beds of richly colored flowers in full bloom. Further back there were hedges of tall rose bushes and various other plants, lining winding walks. All these walks went to a common centre, a circle enclosed by a high hedge, which surrounded an arbor covered with vines.

Hartley did not at the time notice the symmetrical and charming arrangement of the garden, for he was not in a condition to receive pleasurable impressions; and he would have gone on past, but that just as he was abreast the arbor, he heard a few notes of a song come from its direction. He instantly checked the horse, and looked that way with a beating heart, for the voice seemed famil-

far and the song was one he had heard before. He listened intently. The voice sang sweet and clear again,

“Bee in the deep flower-bells,
Brook in the cavern dim,
Fawn in the woodland dells
Hideth him.”

And in a moment more Mary Dewhurst appeared, walking in one of the hedge-lined paths directly toward him.

At that sight he no longer felt heat, or fatigue, or agitation. With a coolness which must have been exaltation, he dismounted, threw his animal's rein over the low garden palings, and sprang over himself. Mary had not seen him, and was now walking toward the house. He called her: “Mary!” was all he could say. At his voice she stopped and turned, saw him, and became very pale. She stood motionless awaiting him.

He went rapidly to her, and took her hand in his without saying a word. For a moment they remained so, until Hartley could speak and Mary's face had changed from white to vivid rose. All Hartley's resolves, his intention of waiting for encouragement, his eloquent speeches thought out on night watches—all vanished away. He was silent for a time, but his face spoke for him. “Dear Mary?” he said at last, and that was all.

Then he dropped her hand, and plucking a white rose he turned again to her. She took the rose with a most lovely smile, a smile that expressed her mingled emotion of gladness, shame, and agitation at once. “Let us go into the arbor,” said he, offering his arm. She took it, and they walked together back into the path by which she had come out, the hedges hiding them more and more, until they reached the cool inner seclusion and shade.

There he stopped, and turning to her, took the rose from her hand and placed it in her hair. Then he took her in his arms for an instant and kissed her. Mary suffered it, though she drew back and did not return his caress.

"Sit down, Mr. Hartley," said she; and he saw her eyes full of shining tears.

"Please do not call me that: my name is Henry for you."

"Well; if I must," she answered, smiling through her tears.

"Dear Mary," he said, "I have made you cry. I am sorry. I won't do so any more." As soon as he said it, he felt that it was either a false promise or he wished it to be; but she answered, "No—I feel very glad you have come. But—Henry, please do not—"

"What, my own love?"

"Do not put your arms around me," she went on; "I hardly seem acquainted with you—it has been such a little while since we first met—I seem hardly to know you, yet—I can't tell why I am so glad to see you."

"Well, my dear one, I have enough, I am satisfied—satisfied is a poor word for it—I am paid for all." He looked upward and said, in a voice of rapturous address, "O, how thankful I am!" Mary's eyes fairly ran over with sympathetic emotion at beholding the deep joy of the man whom she loved so much better than she knew.

After awhile she asked him what he meant by being paid for all. Hartley forgot his rash promise, and straightway tried to kiss her again.

"That is what pays for all," he said.

"Henry, Henry, you said you would not."

"I forgot," he answered contritely.

"You must remember, sir," she said severely, but she smiled as she said it. "I did not ask about the pay,"—she blushed,—"*but what you meant by all.*"

Then Hartley went back to his hopes, fears, anxieties, and jealousy; and Mary listened sweetly, and questioned a little, and kept him in his seventh heaven, while her heart more and more warmed to him, as she more and more understood how strong was his love. She felt as if she, too, were getting into love.

Surely it was a pleasant thing for them, two very nice young folks, good-looking and adoring each other, to come to such a mutual understanding. Spring, and flowers, and soft breezes, and waving vines, and fresh fragrances, and love, and one another—we don't get anything more blissful in these low grounds of sorrow. Hartley was unconscious of the world, however. World, and life, and time were effaced from his mind ; a throbbing ecstasy of love, and a joyful longing for expression, supplanting all the rest. He knew nothing but happiness then. And there they sat for hours, taking no note of time, after the manner of lovers, but, nevertheless, having a very good time. How silly such love seems to us old married people !

When Hartley hitched his marine charger to the fence, everybody in the house but Mary was asleep, taking a nap after luncheon. The kitchen windows did not look that way, so he was entirely unobserved, and had a clear field, or garden, to himself. The family awoke up after awhile, and missed Mary, but supposing her in the garden, where she loved to idle, they did not seek her. But the lovers were both so entirely oblivious, that at last Mrs. Dewhurst and Isabel went out to look up the absentee.

The sound of their approaching voices recalled the pair in the arbor to consciousness. Mary looked ashamed and scared.

"Let's go out and meet them," said Hartley.

"Oh ! no !"

"Well, they will come in and find us," laughed he ; "I am willing for anybody to see me when Mary Dewhurst honors me by taking my arm."

She took his arm and they went out, but her courage failed her and she let go again. When the ladies came upon them around a bend of the path, Mary was shrinking as close to the hedge as she could get, Hartley edging over after her ; she blushing fearfully, and he as gay as a child. Of course the ladies read the situation at once, but Hartley's lightsome joyousness was perplexing to Mrs. Dew-

hurst. She felt it to be a serious matter. Was not Mary her only child? and her happiness or sorrow through life now settled? But of course Hartley could not look at it with her eyes. He was ever so glad to see them, asked questions about their voyage, praised their lovely garden in flowing extravagant words, dilated on their charming situation, and was overjoyed to hear of Mr. Dewhurst's improved health.

Mrs. Dewhurst asked how long he had been there, alluding to the arrival of the ship. Hartley replied, with an unavoidable look at Mary, that "he did not know exactly." Then pulling out his watch he found it was five o'clock.

"Miss Mary's conversation was so interesting after being so long away from home and tossing about at sea, that I really did not observe."

Isabel smiled openly at him, and Mrs. Dewhurst's face relaxed.

"When did the Flying Fish arrive, I mean," she said.

"Oh, I thought—she came in early this morning," replied Hartley. Mary was as mute as a mouse all the time.

After awhile Mrs. Dewhurst asked him into the house. Mr. Dewhurst met him rather queerly.

"I can't say I'm glad to see you, sir; but be welcome: I expected you would come."

Mrs. Dewhurst looked aghast for an instant at the apparently discourteous speech. Isabel favored Hartley with one of her quiet smiles, which always meant something. Mary was astonished, and managed to raise her eyes, but dropped them again on finding her father looking reproachfully at her. Hartley answered pleasantly:

"I remember your saying on our first meeting that you were a friend to the service and always glad to see naval officers, sir; and Miss Mary accused you of mercenary gratitude. Must I believe she was right?"

"It's not that I love Rome less, but Mary—I mean Cæsar—more," replied Mr. Dewhurst dryly.

Hartley understood, and let the ladies turn the talk.

He tried to get a cue from Mary as to her wishes, for he was longing to speak to her parents, particularly to Mrs. Dewhurst. In his joyfulness he was ready to adopt that lady as mamma. But Mary would not look at him, and, had she wished to give him a word apart, she had no chance. She really felt that she had been too forward, and was afflicted with the usual complaint of modest maidens in like circumstances. So when the talk was talked out, and Mrs. Dewhurst and Isabel could not keep it going any longer, Hartley felt that he must leave.

Mrs. Dewhurst gave him a sad invitation to call frequently while in port and to bring his brother officers over. Mr. Dewhurst said gruffly that he would be glad to see them all, and requested him to tell the captain he should do himself the honor of making him a visit. Isabel said good-by cordially, and shook hands to give Hartley a pretext for holding Mary's hand a second. That young woman could not speak yet, but gave him a look that did him good. She was as shy as a fawn.

Once out of the house he walked rapidly away so brimming full of happiness that he felt he must hurry to save it from wasting by pouring some of it into Garnet's sympathizing bosom. At six he was aboard again, and in ten minutes had Garnet forward telling him incoherently all about it. No, not all; for he found there was now a line he could not pass, that he had now a subject of which he could not give a full account to his old friend.

Garnet was pleased that Hartley was so glad, but also rather bored. On the whole he stood it very well and managed to sympathize enough and to make the few remarks necessary. He did try to joke him, but soon saw he might as well make fun of the main-mast for all the impression produced.

At supper Hartley told a good new story, laughed at old yarns which the day before had been wearisome, ate a hearty meal, and was altogether so buoyant and cheerful, that his messmates felt and wondered at the change. He

had the morning watch, but, knowing he could not sleep, exchanged with the other officers so as to be on duty until two o'clock. Four hours never passed so quickly before, as six did that night. He scarcely felt the hard deck he trod, or observed the passage of time, for he was engaged in going over and over again the events of the afternoon.

CHAPTER XI.

NEXT morning the boatswain and most of the midshipmen went on shore together, starting early and full of expectations of pleasure. After cruising about the town a few hours, buying all sorts of trashy curiosities, drinking a good deal of poor wine and eating vast quantities of fruit, they hired horses and rode into the country. They alarmed and amused the natives by their reckless and peculiar style of riding. Several of them tumbled off the horses, but, with the usual luck of middies, none of them were severely hurt, though at last one was stunned by the fall. Mr. Thick dismounted and went up to the unconscious youngster, and asked if he were hurt. Of course he got no answer. Thereupon he turned to the party riding up and told them to keep back and give him air.

"Is he hurt, bos'n?" asked half a dozen of them.

"No, he's quiet," replied Thick; "just give him air. Some o' you fellows might ride over him now, if I wasn't along. There ought to always be an old hand along to look out for squalls in these hoss cruises, specially when midshipmen is navigatin' the hosses."

In a few minutes the stunned middy recovered, and gallantly remounting insisted on going ahead. "Nothing the matter but a little ringing in my head," he said.

By and by they came to a small alligator pear tree growing alone in an open space, and far from any house. There was just one pear on it. The youngsters, who were

curious to examine and taste the new fruit, dismounted and hitched their horses, and tried to bring it down by throwing sticks and stones. The boatswain thought it all wrong. He pleaded earnestly with them to let it alone. He told them that it was without doubt a cultivated fruit, and asked them how they would like to have their apples stolen at home. One midddy said to that, that "he had no apples himself, but it was plaguy good fun to hook other people's." The boatswain begged unavailingly.

A lady and gentleman passing in a carriage stopped a minute out of curiosity to see what the party of boys in uniform were doing. Thick insisted that the couple were probably the owners of the tree, and were going to town to send out the police. Still the missiles flew at the pear, which, though bruised, clung to its stem tenaciously. Evidently, the pear was not ripe.

Mr. Thick made a last appeal. "Young gentlemen, you are officers in the United States Navy, and accordin' as officers behave on shore, 'longshore folks thinks well or ill o' the service. You ought always to try and propitiate the inhabitants wherever you go, for the good o' the service. I'm going back to town." So saying, he got upon his horse and rode away. Either his speech or his departure made the midshipmen leave the pear where they found it.

They all went back another way. At a bend in the road a culvert was constructing to take the place of an old plank bridge over a gully, and there was an unguarded opening about twelve feet deep on one side. On the other side enough of the culvert was completed for a narrow road-way. A long slope led to it from the side by which the mids were approaching, and down this slope they galloped, holding on to the pommels of their saddles and cheering, in blissful ignorance of the hole around the corner. Coming suddenly on it in a body, they were unable to stop, and the consequence was that two of those on the outside were crowded off into the gully.

The midshipmen scrambled out unhurt, but it was hard

on the other animals. One horse was killed and the other had a fore-leg broken. The mishap and the sudden expectation of a big bill at the stable sobered the party down. Mr. Thick was the only one who seemed entirely undismayed.

"Young gentlemen," said he, "you get blue under the gills too quick. Surely it isn't much for so large a party as this to pay for one horse."

"It's two."

"Because that brute has broke his leg we have to *pay* for him! No, sir, that is too old a trick to take in William Thick with. I know the stable-keepers always charge it; but, young gentlemen, it is a common thing for hosses in such a fix to recover their health. Oh, I know a good deal about hosses—you needn't laugh, Mr. Larkin. Now I'm goin' to show you what to do for a sick hoss."

So saying he drew from his pockets a number of parcels carefully tied up in old newspapers, which proved to contain wads of oakum, pieces of ratlines stuff, and bits of old canvas. The middies gathered around, and laughed uproariously as each bundle was unwrapped.

"I always carry my tools with me as far as I can, in case accidents should happen. I see nothin' to laugh at. Where would you be now, if I hadn't been thinkin' *for* you before we left the ship."

Mr. Thick cut several sticks, which he said were "Scotchmen for splints." He then bent the ratlines stuff to the horse's hind legs, and with the assistance of the midshipmen dragged the animal a few feet further up the gully, remarking that "it was no good to fix him up if they left him right there where a low bridge would soon go over him." Then he set to work.

"Steady out the leg lines, young gentlemen—Mr. Young, catch a turn over that rock! Swing off on it, Mr. Young. There, belay! I don't care to get kicked while I fish him. Now mind you don't slack up, anybody, don't check an inch. Mr. Munson, oblige me by sitting on his

head. Mr. Smith, I'll trouble you to dip while I serve. Mr. Godolphin, stand by with the Scotchmen, sir." By this time the beast was very thoroughly secured, and lay still and resigned to whatever might come. Mr. Thick commenced working.

"You see, young gentlemen," said he, "I know well what I am doin', and you had all better observe; though I see by your looks you are not inclined to regard it serious. By the hokum! my own fore-leg—my arm, I mean—was broke in two places once, and I reckon a man's better'n a hoss any day. Mr. Munson, you must preserve your gravity better. Laugh, if it pleases you, but don't sway and surge in that lubberly fashion, or you'll fall off."

Thick covered the fore-leg very deftly with canvas, as if he were parcelling a forward swifter, laid on his improvised splints with care, and secured them by wrapping them around with the spun-yarn. He got up exclaiming:

"There's a good job well done, ship-shape and Bristol fashion, and a hoss saved. But avast! we must secure him for heavy weather or he'll be getting adrift and there'll be the devil to pay and no pitch hot."

So saying he tied the brute's hind feet together, and fastened back his "spare fore-leg," putting on canvas to prevent chafe.

"There, young gentlemen, you are one hoss better off than you would have been if I hadn't been along."

"How long will it take him to get out of the sick-bay, bos'n?"

"Ten days, so as to be about, though he shouldn't be rode by midshipmen short of a month."

"But what's he goin' to eat?"

"You're right," replied the boatswain. "Hey, John!" he called to a black man who had been watching the latter part of the operation from the bank of the gully; "come here. We got one sickee hossee—very bad." The darkey knew no English, but saw he was addressed, and grinned wide and whitely.

"You fetchee this hossee plenty water, plenty—what does a hoss eat?—yes—all right—plenty hay, plenty corny; and when he git well, you know, takee off that bit o' ratlin' stuffee, and secure him at Jansen's stable."

The darkey laughed again, and Thick, with some idea that his directions were not perfectly understood, took out a dollar, and throwing it to him, said gruffly,

"There's a dollar, you dam fool; take that for your trouble, and when we get back this way, I'll take it out of your hide, if you don't tend to him right."

"Why, Mr. Thick," said a middy, "you ought always to try to propitiate the inhabitants."

"He's no inhabitant—nothin' but a dirty nigger."

The party returned to town, the two dismounted mids riding double on the quietest horses. They were much disgusted at having to pay for the two horses after all, and Mr. Thick would not agree to it until the stable-keeper made him understand that he had acquired a title to the wounded animal. That matter settled, they put their remaining cash together, bought a small but vicious monkey with it, and went on board.

That night a heavy shower fell, which converted the gully into a torrent as usual, and furnished "plenty water" to put the poor horse out of his misery.

Hartley had a very different day of it. He arranged with Garnet so as to be free of duty, and went as straight to the house in which Mary lived as the streets would let him, and as fast as he could walk. He arrived at rather an early hour, but little was his happy mind troubled by the conventionalities. Mary received him blushing and with pleasure, but she was not very demonstrative, evidently would rather the kiss had been omitted, and seemed somewhat constrained. Hartley felt it, but thought he ought to be satisfied with what he had, it was so much more than he deserved, or had only yesterday dared to hope.

Mary could not explain the causes of her reserve, as a matter of course, but surprised Hartley by replying to his

self-depreciation, that it was she who was unworthy. They had a lovers' argument over that, which left it doubtful whether they were both undeserving or each too good for the other. After awhile Hartley asked permission to speak to papa and mamma.

"I don't know whether you really ought," she said hesitatingly, "I—dear Henry—I *do* care for you a little bit, I know, but I am not sure—maybe it's only a girl's passing fancy—maybe you'll see somebody you like better than I. I don't think it ought to be all settled—I am not good enough to be your wife—I"—and she broke down and had to cry.

Hartley was all compassion, and gentleness, and soothing. For once his impulse was wisdom. "Dear Mary," he said, "I don't want to trouble you. Don't cry. You mustn't say you are not good enough for me, dear. I'm so sorry I annoyed you," and plenty more in the same consoling strain. The rogue had a good voice, and he made it as kind as a man's could be.

That helped Mary to recover herself and say, "It wasn't anything he did, but she was—she couldn't tell just what it was—she was foolish to cry for nothing."

When she had dried her tears of maidenly compunction, Hartley began to argue with her. He assured her positively that she did love him, and that she would find it out, and that he was more than satisfied if she would only endure him. He asked her to imagine that he was going away in an hour and that she knew she would never see him again—how would she feel then? She was obliged to confess that he was very different from Martin in her estimation and that she had never felt toward any one else as she did toward him.

"That difference is the difference between love and friendship," he said. Then he touched her heart by painting a picture of his life without her affection, making it sufficiently doleful. At last she again consented for him to see her father.

This time he would not risk a minute's waiting, for Mary had alarmed him, but obtained an interview with Mr. Dewhurst at once, and without parley plunged into business.

"Mr. Dewhurst," said he, "I wrote to you some time ago about my wish to make your daughter my wife, and you left me free to do the best I could. I am glad to say I have been successful. Mary has allowed me to ask for your approval of her choice."

Mr. Dewhurst looked mighty grave.

"Hem! You are aware that my daughter has always lived in comfort—I might say, luxury—sir?"

"Yes," replied Hartley.

"Of course you expect to assure her future?"

"That has been my intention," replied Hartley, "though I know that it is not customary, in the sense you mean."

"It may not be customary, but in my daughter's case I make it necessary, sir. Allow me to ask what you will give her to hold in her own name?"

Hartley thought a minute, tore a leaf out of his pocket-book, made a memorandum and handed it to the careful parent. He examined the list.

"Hem! house on—mum-mum-mum—one hundred shares—mum-mum—" he read in a low voice. "This is entirely satisfactory, Mr. Hartley. I'll do as much for her the day you are married."

Hartley said no more, repelled by his expectant father-in-law's coolness and satisfied with his own success; and he was going out when Mr. Dewhurst spoke.

"Mr. Hartley, I am sorry to part with my girl. She is nearly as good as her mother. I'd cheerfully give away half what I'm worth, to charitable institutions, if I could have her always with me as she was before she saw you."

"Good," thought Hartley, as Mr. Dewhurst paused an instant, "I'll make a point with Mary. Her father sees the difference."

"I must say, however, that it is unreasonable in me to

want her to remain unmarried, and you, I believe, will treat her well—better than anybody else that has been trying to get her. If my consent is not very cordial you know it is from no objections to you.”

Hartley thanked him. Mr. Dewhurst laughed, and told Hartley he was by odds the best son-in-law to be had.

“You’ll be forever cruising and out of the way, and I’ll just have Mary at home with me.”

Hartley smiled and started out again.

“Stop a minute; what is your hurry,” said Mr. Dewhurst; “it’s best to have a perfect understanding. I want to tell you the real reason I agreed with you so promptly. I didn’t believe till this morning that you cared enough for Mary, but when I saw that horse standing half-starved at my fence I was satisfied. Ha! ha! ha! Any young man that forgets a livery-horse, and walks off leaving him hitched indefinitely, must be in earnest. Ha! ha! ha! There—ha! ha! Go hunt her up—ha! ha! ha!” Hartley escaped.

When he found Mary again, it transpired that she had seen her mother and had another cry—a good one, this time—and was now tolerably resigned. Hartley got his kiss by insisting that it was the seal of their engagement and quite the regular thing.

“How did you learn so much, sir?” she asked, laughing.

“Experience is a hard school—” he began.

“There!—I know the rest,” she cried; “how absurd! But is there any real necessity for—for this sealing process?” she finished demurely, with averted eyes.

“Absolutely essential, I assure you. Come, dear, just—”

“Oh, what a tease! One would think you were afraid something would get cold. How about those other times, sir?” she asked saucily, still avoiding his eyes.

“Oh, that was robbery—the right of the strongest, you know.

“Well, you ought to allow an offset, if that’s the case.”

"What do you know about set-offs, my little Portia? You belong to me now, and your first duty is to make me happy. I can't be happy without—just this once, Mary; you must."

"Will you go out of my sight instantly?"

"Twice as quick as that."

"Well—then—if I *must*," and a wave of pink blush spread over her as she held up her face.

"*Why, Henry!*" He was gathering the rosebuds while he might. Instead of one it was six at least.

Hartley ran out, feeling that he had to pay for his brief thrill of pleasure, and Mary was sorry, too, for she had not really meant that he should go.

After this she was more amenable to discipline, and made no more objections; but for all that Hartley still felt a little indefinable something keeping them apart. He grew more dissatisfied and uneasy from day to day. On shore, and with his beautiful idol, he was content, but on board ship, and on duty, he would vex his righteous soul with remembering and interpreting the things which had occurred. He had a sort of short-hand fashion of setting events down in his head as they came along, and afterward would amuse himself by translating them at full length, sometimes incorrectly. In Mary's case the sometimes became frequently: he was too much interested to be a good judge. The truth was that she loved him, and with growing affection, but she could not show her feelings as he did, and her woman's love was gentler and more immature than his masculine passion. To use Mr. Washington Irving's figure, his love was a fast-growing, strong, young tree in a rich soil and under hot suns. It would die from over-stimulus and over-growth, or else change into a character more enduring. Her affection was a young grape-vine, well started, with a good chance to live—perhaps likely to live longer than the tree. Furthermore, Mary was a thorough woman, and she quickly discovered, perhaps knew by intuition, what few of them are

slow in learning, that no market is more easily glutted than that of a woman's favors. And more yet, she was not only modest but bashful. And further still, she had a persistent feeling lingering in her gentle bosom, that she neither cared for Hartley as she ought, nor was she a good enough person to go through life by his side. She was so good, she was humble, and she did not know herself very well, you see. However, it was not surprising that she accepted him. There is something which generally makes women accept the right men, even though they are doubtful about their feelings. When the proper one comes, this vague force comes in and insures future happiness.

Hartley had a talk with Garnet the same day. He told how the course of his love was running smooth, how the engagement had been regularly formed, and then spoke of his feelings and happiness. Garnet's cool acceptance of the latter part of the story rather piqued his friend, but he saw it, and discreetly showed more interest, thus soothing rising discontent. Hartley was so happy just at this moment, that he charitably longed for the whole world, and Garnet in particular, to enjoy similar feelings. He thought, Now here's my dear old Will, a crusty bachelor with no confidence in women—who are angels—and not caring to see anything of them. He gets worse, too, from year to year. He will be lonesome when we are married, and I resign and leave him. He ought to have a wife to turn to—a good, sweet woman—just like my Mary, if that were possible. Isabel would do—she hardly deserves him—she is so cold—but she would do, I guess. I'll sound him.

"Will, you are getting old."

"That's a business we're all engaged in."

"The first thing you know you'll be a dried-up, bald-headed commodore."

"The promotion and extra pay won't come on me without my persayvin it, as Paddy said."

"A weazened, fretful old chap, with no amusement but to haze your officers. If you don't change your ways

you'll not have a soul to care for you—leaving out myself at a distance—and no other correspondent, besides the Navy Department."

"Why do you say yourself at a distance?"

"I think I'll resign as soon as I'm married. Even if I stayed in the service we should have to separate after awhile."

"That's so. What remedy can you offer against this cheerless old commodoreship?"

"One you profess to hate. Form new ties nearer and dearer than any you have ever known. You've no business enduring life in your stoical way; you've never fairly tried it, and don't know that you can't enjoy it. The greatest happiness in the world is in your reach, and you won't take the trouble to pick it up."

"You mean for me to marry?"

"Stupenduous idea, and most amazing, isn't it?"

"It *is* rather an important thing. You must acknowledge that I am better off than some married men you know."

"You talk as cautiously as a young miss. Of course it's a lottery, but choose the best looking ticket you can find, and trust to luck. There are no blanks, you know."

"No prizes, you mean. Then, talking of choosing the best looking ticket, in a regular lottery you can get your choice and pick, but in this—hem!"

"Pooh! think of having children growing up about you, and loving you, and catching you around the legs, and calling you daddy, and making you spin yarns for them."

"I confess to a liking for babies."

"A liking! haw! haw! haw-w!—I should say so. Haw-haw-w! Recollect the time you kept the boat waiting while you stopped to hush the yellow baby that fell out of the door? Dirty little thing! haw! haw! haw! And how the mother of the imp blessed you for daring to meddle with her young one! Yes, you *do* like babies."

"Seriously now, Will, it would be a great comfort for you to be able to think of a good loving woman waiting for you on ashore, and the pickaninnies all expecting you."

"That's a more attractive light to put it in. I am half of your mind—but how am I to manage it?"

"Manage what? why your wife will manage you, of course."

"The finding of the wife, I mean, my dear fellow; or, rather, the finding of the woman to ask. We are at some distance from the white settlements here."

"You—"

"You can't expect me to go ashore and walk into every door I come to till I find a young woman, and then to propose on the spot."

"No, of course—"

"That's the only chance I see. We shan't be stopping here long enough to make acquaintance and do courting in the customary manner."

"Will, there's a lady here now that would suit you admirably, and you know her already."

"Miss Dewhurst or Miss Terrell?"

"You had better take the one that comes handiest, if it is all the same to you."

"It is."

"Then pay your attentions to Miss Terrell."

"Well, that's settled. Much obliged, Hal."

"I wish it were settled, really and truly."

After awhile Garnet said very deliberately:

"Harry, I have thought this thing over, and I would marry if I could. But I must have time to learn something about the lady—to pick a little, if I may say so;—and I must be satisfied that she and I can keep up the high state of friendship married folk need so much; and I must get her to like me well enough to accept me. All this requires time, and I never have the time; so it is more than likely I shall die single. But I don't look forward to a disagreeable life. I am very well contented." Then he changed the

subject with a question. "Did you hear about Dularge's observation?"

"No. What about it?"

He has been trying to rate the chronometers, and sad work he has made. I showed him how to bring the images together in the mercury; and every morning he goes ashore and gets a lot of sights, and comes off, and swears over them all day. He got a notion in his head that the chart had Santa Cruz down in the wrong latitude; and he went ashore last night to satisfy himself with an observation of Polaris. When he returned I asked him how he had succeeded. He said he got one image in the quick-silver and guessed the reading was about $35^{\circ} 50'$."

"Gracious, what a fool! But was he serious?"

"As far as I could tell he was."

"I declare, I don't half like the idea of his navigation. It's bad enough to trust him in fair weather at sea, but among these islands—"

"Don't fret. The captain is rating the chronometers. He will not trust an incompetent officer."

Garnet was somewhat impressed by what his friend had said, in spite of apparent nonchalance; and he thought more frequently of the dull prospect of a lonesome life. The little he had seen of Isabel had pleased him. Now, from being near her, and hearing of her, and, perhaps, partly from Hartley's infection, he again began to reflect upon matrimony.

Hartley had long since told Mary of his love for Garnet, and after their engagement had talked a great deal of his friend. Thus Garnet became of consequence to Mary, vicariously. She talked about him freely to Isabel, who was chatty enough in her company, so that her cousin obtained indirectly a pretty high opinion of her Damon's Pythias. Hartley had never mentioned Isabel's name in speaking his wish for Garnet to marry. To-night he resolved to ask Mary how the other pair would match the first time he saw her. And so he did.

Next day the Dewhursts came to see the ship. The captain had them in the cabin, and sent for Garnet—Hartley had come off with them—to help entertain them. Garnet was at first embarrassed, for he knew he should have called, and that he was the only officer on board who had not responded to the invitation given on the ship's arrival. The Dewhursts were too well-bred to question him, however, even if they had not known of his avoidance of society. Hartley, in speaking of his friend, had mentioned this defect. He said, "He is like a soldier crab, and the ship is his borrowed shell. He won't stir out of it if he can help it." Very soon they put him at his ease, and Mrs. Dewhurst devoted herself to making him talk. That he was able to do very well in a sensible straight-forward manner, and so he did upon this occasion. Isabel, at first listening to her uncle and Captain Merritt, was won away by degrees to notice what Garnet said, and then to reply. She was curious about him, having got from Mary a notion that he was highly educated, witty, cynical, and bashful, with every needful good quality, all of which did not tally with what she had seen of him at home. There the impression made had been of a sensible well-informed man, rather quiet, but not differing markedly from other gentlemen. But that was stale and Mary's talk fresh, so there was a slight confusion in her mind she wished to settle. Besides, there was, perhaps, a natural attraction.

When the captain showed them over the ship, Mrs. Dewhurst, who was afraid the guns would go off, took her husband's arm, and Isabel fell to Will Garnet's care. After their tour of inspection was completed, and everything had been duly admired for its immaculate cleanness and perfect order, they went up and had chairs on the quarter-deck. The awnings were spread and a little breeze was blowing. Mary and Henry naturally enjoyed each other's company best, and sat apart in undemonstrative pleasure. Mr. and Mrs. Dewhurst had found old memories or friends in common with Captain Merritt, and the three were chatting

quietly. Garnet and Isabel were thus left an opportunity to talk and to learn something about one another, which agreed with their wishes. When the party returned to the shore they parted in a very friendly manner and with a mutual good opinion. Garnet thought, "Miss Terrell is certainly a very superior girl. I do not know that Hal's advice was bad." He began to reflect on future possibilities, an occupation in which he detected himself, and which he ended by calling himself a fool.

The first lieutenant came up the ladder and joined the captain as soon as the guests were well clear of the ship.

"Mr. McKizick, I did not send for you, for I thought you might possibly be engaged," said Captain Merritt with his quizzical twinkle.

"I am obliged to you, sir," replied McKizick. "*I was* middling busy—leastways, I'm never much of a hand to palaver to strange ladies. There's my wife at home—I can get along tolerable well with her, but I can never make out exactly what course *she's* steering—and you can't expect me to know the motions of women I never saw before."

"Very true, sir," responded the captain, with another twinkle.

"I came up to report Mr. Robbins to you, sir. He staid on shore all night."

"Indeed! and what reason did he give?"

"None of any consequence."

"Did he know the order for every one to be off by midnight?"

"Yes, sir."

"I'm sorry. I suppose I must speak to him. What reason did he give?"

"Well, sir," answered McKizick deliberately, and with seriousness, "he came off at seven bells in the morning watch. I was on deck and asked him why he had overstaid his liberty. He got huffy at that and said I talked to him like I would to a sailor-man. I told him no offence was meant, and asked him the same thing over in a fashion

more agreeable to the rank of lieutenant of marines, and then he said he didn't know as he was accountable to me for his goings and comings. I told him that was true, but to save trouble I generally attended to such matters, and I thought maybe he had a good reason for not obeying the order, which would make it discretionary with me to inform you or no. So he comes down off the monument, and tells me that when he tried to get a boat, it was blowing so hard nobody would venture into the harbor with him. It was as smooth as a mill pond, sir, as you know—not a breath of air before the middle of the morning watch. But there was no proper lie in it, because he really believed it himself. The mess are joking below about 'Mr. Robbins's hurricane' now, sir, and I suspicion he was a little bit slewed."

"Very good, sir. When you go below be so kind as to tell him I wish to see him on the quarter-deck."

"Aye, aye, sir." McKizick went on to grumble about the midshipmen, whom he accused of being no assistance to him, and of no use in the ship."

"Does Mr. Larkin trouble you very much?"

"Well, no—I can't say he does. Mr. Larkin is a little lazy, but he has his good points. He is a very honorable young gentleman."

"That Mr. Young is a very trifling fellow, isn't he?"

"Oh, no; I don't think so. He is full of sky-larking, and I have had to punish him two or three times; but it's only like his name—he's young. A few years will make a big difference in him, sir."

The captain turned the subject for a few minutes, and then came back.

"McKizick, there's one of the midshipmen I wanted to ask you about—Mr. Smith. Isn't he very careless and lubberly?"

"Careless and lubberly! I can't say I ever saw anything of the kind, sir. He is a decent young man, and works the fore-top quite to my mind."

By degrees the captain drew further encomiums, until not a middy in the ship was left unpraised. Then he said, "I perceive what the trouble is. The midshipmen are plenty good enough individually—in fact, each one of them is a fine young fellow—but when you take them collectively they are of no assistance to you. That is to say, the whole is less than any one of its separate parts." The captain twinkled his gray eye at McKizick.

"That's not fair, captain, I protest—"

"There are two things no midshipman likes to do, sir; you may depend on it."

"What's that?"

"Stand a watch and go in a boat. Send Mr. Robbins up, McKizick, will you?" Merritt was low on the commanders' list and McKizick high on that of lieutenants, which brought the two officers closer together in many respects than was customary between those in similar positions.

Hartley made the most of his short time. He was at the Dewhurst cottage in season and out of season. He told Mrs. Dewhurst how soon he would have to go, and frankly begged her to stand his friend, giving him all the opportunity to see Mary she possibly could. "In a week we sail," he said, "and though we shall return, there's no certainty of finding you here again." Mrs. Dewhurst fenced a little with him, but his earnestness conquered her.

"There is only one thing to prevent your seeing Mary as often as you wish, Mr. Hartley, and that is herself: for she may get the idea if you come very often and stay long that she is doing wrong. But I think I can manage that for you."

"Thank you. I want to have all I can of her company while the ship stays here. What a misery this long separation is!" he added, with a forlorn air.

"You must keep up your courage, my dear Mr. Hartley. A day at a time it will all go by, and neither of you will be any the worse for waiting. You must not borrow

trouble : you have a whole week left, yet. Ah, Mr. Hartley, you love my child very well in your way, no doubt, and I know you feel sorry to part from her : but every day brings nearer the time when you will gain her and I shall lose her. The less your trouble gets, the nearer at hand mine is." Then Hartley forgot his dismal anticipations to pity her and assure her that he meant they should never be separated. Which proved him to be either very unselfish or very ignorant.

So as the ten days passed he stayed with his beloved all he could. Each morning when he met her she was more welcome to his eyes than a dewy rose ; and, when he said *good night*, he thought, in the poet's language,

"How can I call the lone night good,
Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?"

As his visit drew near its close he began to worry again about his darling's lack of the cordial reciprocation he wished. He had learned the wisdom of not being too sweet, and she was loving him better every day, and liking him, too, for his good taste ; but he could not know how much he was gaining. Her mind was becoming reconciled to the engaged state ; and now that he withheld his caresses, she bade fair, woman like, soon to desire them.

Two nights before they sailed, he and Garnet went over, Garnet to pay his respects and Hartley 'on duty' as his friend styled it. Mary had become as anxious as her lover to see the other couple take to each other kindly, and she watched them with all of Hartley's interest. To their mutual disappointment, Garnet kept away from Isabel all evening, devoting himself mainly to her uncle and reminiscences of the late war. Hartley could have scolded him for what he declared to Mary was mere mulishness ; but he was afraid of making the subject unpleasant by saying anything more about it just then. His mind was thoroughly made up to have his friend happy with a family, but he saw no means of working to that end.

On that evening they all discussed their plans for future movements. Mr. Dewhurst meant to wait about a month longer if he could ; but would take any suitable opportunity that offered earlier to go to the Havana by the south side of Cuba. It was really uncertain whether they would wait two weeks longer or six. Captain Merritt had told his officers to stock their messes for about a month, as he intended to return to Santa Cruz within that time.

The next evening was the last one together, and the lovers spent it all by themselves, and made it long. Hartley was sad at going away from Mary, for such an indefinite time, and very anxious to get a fuller, freer expression of love from her before he went. She was sad because he was, and also because she was about to lose sight of a person who had become pleasant, almost necessary, to her. She really wished to speak out and make him happy, but the old influences of doubt, maiden modesty, and maiden perversity, made it impossible for her to bestow the parting cheer she would have given.

Once during the evening, pondering upon the "ceaseless farewell-taking, endless parting," incident to a seaman's life, he got very blue and very tired of the service. Mary had never looked so attractive and lovable, as now that he was about to leave her. He thought it would be happiness to remain forever with her, if he could forever feel her round arms about his neck, and her wavy hair brush his face, and see her rich blue eyes closely beaming into his, and hear her voice speak to him, low and loving. Then he grew very bitter, and the Navy appeared to him a cruel, unnatural, wicked life. But he soon remembered that he was a man, and had no right to yield to so small an ill : he remembered duty, too, and his sense of honor made him hold up his head and take a more manly view of the situation. After awhile he was almost cheerful again, and he succeeded in making the farewell almost not unpleasant to Mary. She returned his good-by kiss very cordially. It was the first time she had ever kissed him back, and it

thrilled him. He almost embraced her, obedient to his impulse, but managed somehow to restrain himself, and in a second more he had gone away into the darkness.

Mary went to bed to lie awake a long time and think about him. She knew as soon as he was gone that she cared a great deal for him.

When the Flying Fish sailed out next day with a leading wind, she passed near the palm-crowned light-house point. Hartley saw, from his station on the spar-deck, a gentleman standing with three ladies near a carriage on the beach. The ship swept by near enough for him to distinguish that they were the Dewhursts come down to see them off. Out waved his handkerchief in defiance of all rules of naval etiquette. Evidently his number was recognized, for there was a quick reply, all three ladies showing their white answering pendants. Garnet joined Hartley on the booms, and Hartley insisted on his waving, also. They passed by rapidly. Mrs. Dewhurst helped his wife in the carriage and got in himself, but the two young ladies walked on down the beach to the extreme end of the point. Hartley found himself well aft—as far aft as possible to get—actually leaning over the taffrail. He and Mary were keeping as near together as the circumstances permitted, but the strip of water between them fast grew wider. As long as he could see, Mary remained down at the end of the point; or he thought so, which was much the same thing. Garnet came along after awhile.

“Hal, in old Virginny when they think a woman about perfect they call her a ‘far speck.’ I suppose you think just now your Miss Mary is a ‘far speck.’ So do I.”

“It’s no time to punish me now,” answered Hartley ruefully.

“Do you recollect my prophecy about the palm-tree and the light-house?”

“Yes, Will.”

“My fee is five dollars.” At Hartley’s blank look he

went on: "My fee for a correct prophecy of the fifth class is always five dollars."

"Well," answered Hartley, "Go thou and do likewise. My fee for correct advice is ten dollars."

"Your advice is correct. I'd like to know that Miss Terrell—or some other girl as good—was thinking about me as your Miss Mary is about you."

CHAPTER XII.

THE Flying Fish dashed gayly through the waters to the westward.

"Cloudy shapes and fears forlorn
Flew, like shadows at the morn,"

away from Hartley's mind in his ever-present pressure of work and his welcome of the sea. He really loved the sea, and it would cost him something to give it up as a following.

By the way, patient reader, did the quaintness and poetry in calling a sailor a 'follower of the sea' ever strike you? If not, think about it now.

When they sailed, Captain Merritt sent for Dularge and thus addressed him:

"Mr. Dularge, have you the chronometers rated?"

The unhappy fellow had several rates in his note-book, but was not sure which was right, or, in truth, that any was; but he answered:

"Yes, sir."

"What is it for the working instrument?"

Dularge took his book out of his pocket, and after some delay made a selection. "Error, slow, 12m. 7s.; rate, 1½s. gaining," he read.

"What!" exclaimed the captain.

"Oh, I believe I read the wrong figures," said Dularge

feebly. Here it is, sir. Error, slow, 9m. 37s.; rate, 3s. gaining."

"That's a little nearer, but still very far wrong," remarked the captain.

"Perhaps, sir, this result is right. Error, fast—"

"Never mind, Mr. Dularge," interrupted Captain Merritt. "Tell me so and so," putting a question in navigation.

Dularge made a very lame reply.

The captain continued his impromptu examination, getting very little evidence of knowledge out of the master, until at last he asked, "What is a fore observation, sir?"

"That's when you work out the altitude before going on deck, sir."

"That's enough. Have you ever done any deck duty?"

"Yes, sir: I had a watch over a year in the Constitution."

"Very well. I will relieve you as navigator of the ship myself, and you may take a watch for the present. Considering your past opportunities your ignorance is inexcusable. I advise you to study and practice navigation." Captain Merritt sent for Garnet, and desired him to assist Mr. Dularge in acquiring the useful art recommended.

The wind hauled to the west and blew a steady soft breeze. After working up against it for two days, during which the sloop made little on her course, they got news of the vessel they were seeking. A sail appeared to windward and stood down toward them, the Fish making short tacks to intercept her. She came booming down, wing and wing, with a great roll of creamy foam under her bows. When about half a mile distant, the sloop fired a gun, went about and stood across her track. The schooner hove to immediately at the signal, and the cruiser, ranging up within hailing distance, backed her main-yard. Captain Merritt directed the first lieutenant to have a boat manned, and to hail the stranger. The cutter was called away, and McKizick took the trumpet.

"Schooner ahoy!"

"Hello!" was the frank reply from a person in a red shirt, who seemed to be the captain.

"What schooner is that?"

"The Mariner, of Great Egg Harbor."

"Whence come you?"

"The Spanish Main."

"Where are you bound?"

"To Philadelphia. What ship is that?"

"United States sloop Flying Fish, on a cruise. We'll send a boat aboard you."

Directly a midshipman was despatched in the cutter, with directions to request the master of the Mariner to come on board; and in a few minutes the boat returned with that worthy, who had finished his toilet by putting on a greasy black swallow-tailed coat over his shirt. He wore a unique and unshaven aspect.

"Tidy little boat o' your'n, skipper," he remarked with gracious ease to McKizick, who met him at the gangway; "shouldn't mind givin' you a race with my craft in a good breeze."

"The captain is aft, sir: be so good as to step this way," growled the incensed lieutenant in reply.

From the oily individual, who introduced himself as "Captain Haggai M. Kites," they learned that the Mariner, two days before, while beating to windward along the south coast, had been overhauled by a sort o' man-o'-war lookin' craft: "that, suspecting all was not safe, they had cracked on sail, but were unable to get away owing to the fact that there were two barrels of pickled pork in the peak which by rights should have been stowed in the cabin; that the stranger had fired a shot at the Mariner, which passed through the foresail and accounted for its present ragged condition, upon which the Mariner had hove to: that a "Yankee lookin' feller" had come aboard with an armed boat's crew, inquired very particularly about his cargo and what vessels he had seen, gotten what newspapers they

had, jumped into his boat and left "without tellin' his vessel's name nor nothin'"; that the boat was hoisted in a jiffy, the strange schooner's helm was put up, and she stood on toward the land and was "hull down in no time at all." "But I had my glass out, and as she bore up I saw her name quite plain on the stern in gold letters, *La Hembrilyer*; which I take it is Spanish for *little woman* and worse. Well, we pitched right in and got the pork out of the peak inter the cabin, and I'd like to see the craft in these waters could hold her own with us now." Captain Merritt got the date and position of the encounter, thanked the unctuous Kites, gave him a glass of wine and a newspaper, and sent him back to his swift, beloved Mariner. The sloop filled away, trimmed her yards, and stood off on the long leg.

Garnet was thinking about Isabel in his leisure moments. He had about concluded that as a matter of policy it would be well to follow his friend's advice, and though not yet determined to do so, had begun to reflect upon the means of carrying out that cheerful programme of affection, companionship, children, and a home. He was satisfied from what he knew of Miss Terrell that she could not be won by a careless wooer lacking in respect, and under disrespect he classed his fault, well known to himself, of inattention to dress. He thought that if the time came to pay his addresses to Isabel or some other lady, he would begin with a superficial change in his ways, at least, by presenting his outer man adorned and not disfigured. In other words, he would reform his dress; but being ignorant, from long carelessness, of what good dressing was, he thought best to consult Hartley, the ship's authority. They were sitting by the bridle-port reading, with Dularge a little way off, when Garnet took his pipe out of his mouth, closed his book, and remarked, "Hal, I am going to turn over a new leaf."

"So am I: but you needn't shut the book first."

"The book has been open too long at one place. I'm tired of it, and mean to try a fresh one."

"Well, what's over the leaf, do you think?"

"A brand-new suit of shore clothes in the latest fashion. I'm going to try to appear decent, hereafter."

Dularge, who had overheard, approached eagerly and officiously. "I would, by all means," said he. "It will be a great deal more satisfactory to you, and I always find it actually cheaper."

The assurance of the speech and its conceited assumption were too much for Garnet. He turned toward Dularge with feigned surprise and exclaimed, "Why! do *you* dress well?"

"I try to," stammered out the creature, looking foolish.

"Take comfort then, Dularge," said Hartley; "some wise fellow says that 'where endeavors do not yet fully avail they tell as tendency.'"

Dularge went away, but Garnet followed his second thought that it would be better to get information by imitation than by advice.

There was not much of the convivial spirit in the ward-room. They all drank when they wished, in accordance with the easy cake-and-ale virtue of the day, easier afloat than ashore. From the captain and dignified little Doctor Bobus down to the boys, hardly a person passed a day without tasting alcohol in some form; but there was nothing to show it except the red nose of the marine officer. The men's drinking could not exceed the regulation gill of whiskey. The officers took their two or three glasses of wine at dinner; and other liquor according to taste, and though any one who chose might get merry on occasion, no one remarked it so long as the regular course of duty was unbroken. Even to the midshipmen a license was permitted which would be thought sinful in these days with nothing stronger than sherry allowed on board ship.

The ward-room officers lacked the convivial, or, more properly speaking, the carousing spirit, and were consequently a quiet, well-behaved set of men. Even on Saturday night, the weekly time-honored festival of "sweet-

hearts and wives" was observed in a single glass. We know that Hartley never forgot it, or dishonored the toast with a heel-tap at this time; and Garnet, too, began to relish it somewhat.

"Sweet-hearts and wives!" that tells the whole story. The sweet-heart is always before the wife. She naturally happens first, but why is she the most esteemed? Is man an unworthy animal who finds more joy in the pursuit than in a long possession which gives him the chance to appreciate and rationally to enjoy, the only chance to truly love? or is it that woman strives harder to please and satisfy in her first capacity than in her last? Either way, there is in the old sentiment no compliment to the ladies.

If the ward-room was somewhat unmindful of the ancient ceremony, it was not on that account neglected in the budding steerage. There each recurring Saturday evening brought a new celebration, and there were libations copiously poured *in* to the honor of Venus whenever liquor was in the locker. Songs and stories filled up the intervals between the toasts.

On the Saturday evening following the departure of the Fish from Santa Cruz the usual festivities were heightened. The week before, the occasion had been slighted because several members of the mess were on shore and the hearts of the rest were with them; and the week preceding that, the observation of the rites had been feeble, for all were fatigued by the incessant work their captain's activity demanded. There was at this time, therefore, a disposition to atone for past failings, as a man who has dodged his church attendance for several Sundays tries to make it up at last by extra devotion.

After eight bells the midshipmen were all gathered in the steerage, except those on watch. Two good-sized bottles of whiskey, the result of their savings from the daily grög ration, were on the table, backed up by sundry tumblers and lemons, a pitcher of water, and a bowl of sugar. The party were talking and watching their senior, Mr.

Larkin, an old midshipman, who in virtue of his experience always attended to collecting the whiskey rations and mixing the grog. He was very busy brewing a cold whiskey punch, and paid no attention to the many suggestions of his interested messmates.

Mr. Larkin was a smart young man, who had been two cruises at sea already, and was expecting his promotion. He was now old enough to begin thinking, and he did a moderate amount of study and attended very well to his duty; but there was still enough boy in him to lead him into an occasional scrape.

Mr. Smith, as his name would indicate, was young Smith.

Mr. Godolphin was a stout, rosy-faced boy, who had a great facility for catching cold. When affected, he went about wheezing, which affliction at once drew attention to his name. His fellow-mids called him "Go-porpoise," an appellation soon shortened to "Go-porp," and then to plain "Porp."

The other midshipmen were Mumson, Young, Robinson, Maskelyne, and Carter, the last two being at this particular time on duty. They were a set of bright, mischievous lads, full of promise.

The five were watching Larkin make the punch, criticising and suggesting boisterously, when in came Messrs. Thick and Harrison. Both were favorites with the youngsters. Harrison for a sort of dry geniality and for never setting himself and his experiences up as an example, Thick for his peculiarities. The boatswain looked queer, and on close acquaintance his character well sustained his appearance. He was short in stature though mighty in strength, his face was deeply pock-marked, his complexion was a dark natural-leaf, and his little eyes were bright and black and snapping. Like Shakespeare's soldier, he was full of strange oaths. His life had been greatly varied, and he was able to recall the past in such an extensive and interesting manner as to win the admiration of the young fellows with whom his position almost forced him to associate.

Though Mr. Thick had little choice of company, he never felt that it was more than right for him to be thrown on the midshipmen. He was used to it; it was customary in the service; and perhaps their life and sportfulness had become preferable in his esteem to the sedateness of more settled minds. He certainly enjoyed the ascendancy which his peculiarities, his knowledge of the profession, his large experience, his toleration, and his yarns, gave him over the turbulent steerage.

Navy life is the strangest in the world, though looked at from outside it appears simple. Shut several hundred men up in a vessel, have some in authority with a rigid organization over all, and send them abroad for three years. The men become proficient in the use of the sails and the weapons, the officers are skilled and watchful, the ship goes from port to port ready to protect American commerce, prepared to fight if necessary, opening new lands to trade, and getting together knowledge useful to the world. All goes as it should until she returns, when the crew are dismissed and the officers separated among other vessels. That is about the popular notion, but it is not enough. A thinking man who has seen it all looks back upon a great deal more. He remembers the parting with family and friends, the straining into futurity with hope and fear of its events; the fierce passions, the goodness, the care, the carelessness, the expectancy of youth, the material certainty of age, the myriad possibilities, which the ship bears away. He remembers sickness without consolation; anxiety for loved ones; weary labor; wearing responsibility; long watches in the day and the night, in gales and calms, in cold and wet and under blazing suns; fighting with storms; monotonous routine; the strangeness of foreign lands; beguilements of cards and wine and women with song and dance; perhaps the fierce zest of battle. The romance is not gone yet and cannot ever go; but there must be always mingled with it a great deal of downright hard work.

In no regard is navy life more peculiar than in its social aspect. With a despotic government, its society is democratic. There is no aristocracy of money, for few officers have any; little respect off duty to mere rank, and almost no advantage in being old. Age brings wisdom sometimes, and when the two are found together they obtain a hearing. They are all mingled, young and old together, in social equality. Every man is respected for the ability he shows, but this includes his quality as an officer and as a gentleman, also. In plain words, every tub stands on its own bottom. The effect of the commingling of ages is marked. It makes the young man mature early, and it keeps the old boy fresh and lively. When a youngster finds himself among men, with a man's part expected of him, he naturally tries to learn. He puts on the outward appearance, and, if there be any good stuff in him, shortly becomes what he seems.

Mr. Thick's first act on entering the steerage was to turn to the dresser, pick up the coffee-pot which sat thereon, and asking, "Anything in your pot, Jack?" to put the spout in his mouth and throw back his head. No cold coffee rewarded him—the pot was empty. He set it down again disappointed.

"Never mind, Sweet William," said Larkin; "here's better stuff than that. Sit down."

The others greeted him tumultuously. "Come in!" "Welcome, Sweet William!" "Ah! look at his purty face, the darlint!" "The heel o' the afternoon to yez!" Thick, in no wise disconcerted, took a seat.

"We were just going to ask you and Harrison to help us keep Saturday night," said Larkin. "Why, there he is at the door. Come in, Bob, and help us with some punch."

Harrison "was just coming" anyhow, and he entered amid shouts of "Hail, Bob!" "Dry Bob, ahoy!" "Welcome, Idle Bob!"

Larkin struck up in a sweet voice an impromptu song.

"Oh, I know a likely chap,
And wherever he may go,
If he's not two blocks and rap-
Full, liquor's out, you know.
He's a figure fine, and fame,
And a peaceful smiling nob—
Did some fellow ask his name?
Dry Bob!"

The steerage rang with the applause and laughter of the mids, who had joined in the two last words tremendously.

"You do me proud," said Harrison, when the noise had subsided; "I'm afraid that punch 'll be like the Injin's pork."

"How?" asked several.

"It 'lasted dam quick' you know."

"I wish our pork would, too," remarked Godolphin; "Larkin gives nothing else, it seems to me."

"Shut up, Porp," cried Young; "you think more of eating than anything else."

"Keep his glass full and he 'll say no more to-night," put in Munson.

"I tell you what, Mr. Porp," said Thick; "it's a pity I never know'd it in time, but you might just as well 'a had fresh meat as not."

"Why? how?" asked Porp, regretfully.

"Our hoss is dead," replied Thick briefly.

The middies groaned deeply at this announcement, and for a moment there was a sad silence, while one or two pretended to cry and wipe their eyes. Then they broke out. "How did he die, doctor?" "I shall employ another medical man next time, sir." "Poor, faithful servant!" "Did he go off easy, Doc?"

Thick spoke sententiously. "He was drowneded that same night. The rain filled the holler, and that done it. He bilged under the bridge, where he got washed down. I made a mistake lashin' his spars together, for of course he couldn't get under way on one leg, and that sprung."

Godolphin slowly persisted. "I don't see what that has to do with fresh meat."

"If you'd a-seen as many hoss-shoes come o' beef barrels as I have, Mr. Porp, you might believe it as much as I do."

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the alarmed youth.

"With pork it is different. Hogs is not shod," continued Thick.

"I see," admitted Godolphin. They all had a good-natured laugh at him, but he insisted: "I don't think our grub is good enough."

"Dry up, Porp!" shouted Munson. "You'd growl if you had cracker pudden every day."

"No, I wouldn't," denied Godolphin. "It's all very well for you fellows that went ashore so much and got all you wanted to eat, but I was quarantined after the first time we went."

"What for, Porp?" asked the gunner.

"Oh, I had a sheet in the lucky bag. My hammock boy dropped it out. I declare it was too bad of McKizick," he continued, lowering his voice. "I never went to claim the sheet, but when they overhauled the bag in Santa Cruz, McKizick saw my name in the corner, and quarantined me."

"Let this be a warning to you, son Porp," said Larkin, stopping his work. "Better have three sheets in the wind than one in the lucky bag. Gentlemen, the punch is made. Approach and fill your glasses." This was done in reverent silence, for they all respected Larkin's punch. "Gentlemen!" he continued, in a speech-making tone, "I give you the toast of the evening, to be drunk in silence, standing—"

"Hope none of us will be drunk in silence, lying," chirped Young.

"Be silent, sitting, Mr. Young," said Larkin reproachfully. "The toast of the evening, gentlemen. We are hard-working sailors, in the service of our country. We are not unwilling, though we get more knocks than glory."

Pay is small and promotion is slow; but we can all feel bright when we think of the future and of lovely woman. Back yonder in the land we love, await us those we love—*'Sweet-hearts and Wives!'*”

It was drunk in silence, but in a minute they all broke out into applause at Larkin's speech.

“Fill up, fellows, and *I'll* give you a toast!” cried Robinson. “The health of our distinguished messmate, Mr. Larkin. May *his* promotion come soon, anyhow.” The liquor went down with a hearty good-will, and Larkin arose to reply.

“Speech! speech!” called everybody.

“My friends, I am honored by this mark of your esteem,” began the orator, in a serious funny way. “I am unaccustomed to public speaking, and stand before you alike surprised and unprepared. Under these circumstances you will pardon me”—he paused impressively and looked around—“if I sit down instead of standing up, and tell you a story about a Dutchwoman.”

“Yes!” “Sit down!” “Story!” “Give us the Dutchman!” shouted the chorus. “Well,” said he resuming his campstool; “you had better all get a drop of the cratur in your glasses before I begin.

“When I go on leave I have to take a stage-coach and travel a hundred miles, part of it over one of the meanest, roughest roads in the world. It takes twenty-four hours, night and day work, enough to try the patience of a fisherman. You pitch, and roll, and get bumped, till you're so sore you feel like a big travelling boil. Then the eating along the road!—it would kill Porp to make one trip. The farmers try to give you as little and mean as they can for a shilling.

“When I got to Lancaster I took good pains to be on hand at the stage office early, for I wanted an end seat. The middle seat has no back but a leather strap, worse than nothing would be. You keep trying to lean on it, and so does the other man; and when he jolts forward it

slacks up and you fall back, and when he jolts back it tautens out like a span and shoots you forward.

"I got there in good time, but somebody was ahead of me. I paid for my passage, got my trunk put on, and jumped in, resolved to stick to my seat in spite of anything short of a woman in distress—we always have to break out for them, you know. I believe Porp there would give up a chicken pie to save a woman from starvation. When I got in there was a Dutchman and his wife—I mean a Dutchwoman and her husband—on the back seat. By Jupiter! I found it *was* me and my old man before I got home. The next two passengers that came were very reasonable sized men. One of them sat with me and the other took the strap.

"It was almost time to start—about one bell in the first dog-watch, and I was just feeling good that we weren't going to be crowded, when along came two great big fat fellows—enormous chaps—carrying a trunk and blowing like—Porps. The fellow on the middle seat saw them, too. 'Jerusalem cricket!' said he, and he slipped over alongside me. Three on a seat is a pretty close fit; but I couldn't help it, and said nothing. The fat men got their trunk put up, and then they surrounded the coach. One came to the starboard door, one to the larboard. By the Hokum, as the bosen says, it was a tight match for 'em to get through the doors. They squeezed in though, and settled down surprisingly quick. All this time they had'nt said a word, and when they got their seats they just sat still and stared at us like fishes, with never so much as a wink.

"The Dutchwoman and her husband had been still, too; but when we got under way she began to make up for lost time. It was 'John' this and 'John' that, 'John, you preak dat glock'—he had a wooden clock in his lap—and 'John, you growds me.' 'John' one thing or another till I was sick of her. However, she quieted down after

awhile and went to sleep. I wished I could sleep. I was crushed as flat as a flounder.

"The road for the first sixty miles was pretty level, and we didn't bump much, but I wondered how the old lady managed so much better than the rest of us. About two o'clock the moon went down, and the driver stopped to light the lamps. One of them shone into the stage a minute, and I saw how the old lady was stowed. She had got up on the seat, and braced her knees against the side of the coach, and was lying back on the old man. There he sat, one arm around his wife, the other holding the clock, bolt upright in the corner, wide awake and the picture of misery."

"Patience on the lee cat-head, smiling at a wet swab," put in Thick.

"Precisely. Fill your glass, Mr. Thick."

"When the light shone in, it woke the Dutchwoman up. 'John,' said she, 'make dat driver take dat light out my eye.' John didn't say a word. We went ahead again directly, and I believe I slept a little, for the next I knew it was broad daylight and the sun was shining, and I was chilled through and so stiff you couldn't have bent me without breaking me. There sat the two fat men, staring at me like fishes still, and there was the poor Dutchman, looking ten years older, and there sat his wife, as fresh as Lake Erie. 'John,' says she, 'I pleeve you grack mein glock.' 'Nein,' says he. 'Yah, you grack dat glock mein mutter gif me fife year.' And she went on and abused John, and fussed and scolded till I felt like kicking her out. When she looked at the clock there wasn't anything the matter with it after all.

"The road was a little rough by this time, but we did pretty well. The fat men were too heavy to surge much, though the Dutchwoman began to look uneasy about something. However, we did very well till we stopped, and got breakfast, and set off again. Then the road was awful.

"The fat men commenced to bob about tremendously.

They would slip back on the seat and squeeze the Dutch-woman and her old man, until a big jolt would come and throw them forward on us again. I saw the old woman was getting mad, and I looked out for squalls. The fat man in front of her had a stern like a junk—round and big and full in the run, you know—and he took up room enough at his best.

“By and by it breezed up a bit. ‘John!’ she whispered, sharp and angry, ‘make dat man keep on he seat.’ John didn’t do anything, but the fat man slipped as far forward as he could. He worked back again directly, and it began to freshen. ‘John, dat man on my knee.’ John said nothing, but the fat fellow crowded forward again. But he couldn’t help sliding back with the motion of the stage, and it was a weighty matter for him to move himself. Then it blew a strong breeze. ‘John, you tell dat man keep off o’ *me!*’ John didn’t answer. ‘*John!* you hear what I tell you?’ Not a word out of John. ‘*JOHN!* you tell him he must move!’ No answer. ‘A *bretty* sort of a husband *you* is! Say, you man, you *move!*’

“The fat man moved forward with a sigh. Pretty soon it was, ‘Mister, you get off o’ my *leg!*’ It was a moderate gale now. Pretty soon again, ‘Mister, you keep off o’ me, by dam!’ Every time she spoke he would slide forward, but in a minute he would slip back. ‘Mister, you get out o’ my lap!’ Strong gale blowing now. ‘Mister, you got to get off o’ my lap, you hear *me?*’ ‘Mister, you hurt my leg!’ ‘Mister, you must get out o’ my *lap*, by dam!’ ‘Mister, woman no like *every* man set in her lap.’ ‘Mister, you keep out o’ my lap, or I stick a pin in you, *by Lord!*’ Roaring hurricane.

“I watched the fat man closely then. For awhile he managed to keep forward, but in five minutes he forgot and slipped back. All on a sudden his face twitched and got red, and he gave a squirm and a groan. She had done it.

“The fat man looked at me, and for the first and last

time he spoke. 'Young—man,' says he, 'would—you—jest—as lief—change—seats—with—me?' I changed with him, and we had a dead calm.

"Gentlemen, I propose the health of a veteran tar, browned by the suns of twenty cruises, toughened in a thousand gales, gray in his country's service, our esteemed guest, the bosen!"

The toast was drunk, and Thick began. "I suppose you want me to spin you a yarn like Mr. Larkin done, but I'm thankful to say I live on the coast, and never have occasion to go out o' sight o' salt water between cruises.

"I've seen enough that's hard to forgit in my life, and when it comes in natural I can spin yarns as long as anybody; but jest to set down and pick good stuff out of all the oakum in my head, and reel that off in a nice slick fox, ain't so easy. I dont believe I can do it, if you'll let me off.

"But what Mr. Larkin was sayin' about bein' tough and weather-beaten reminds me o' when I was a young man in the service and went out bosen's mate o' the schooner Grampus. We was cruisin' in the Gulf, protectin' merchantmen, for I tell you the pirates was worse then nor now—a bloody sight worse. They robbed as much and murdered more. I've know'd a loaded merchantman to lay three months in the Havana waitin' for a convoy, and then git snapped up outside the harbor.

"We had been down to the Spanish Main with a convoy, and chased a pirate and run him ashore below San Antonio comin' back, and we was proceedin' to Charleston accordin' to orders, for some ships waitin' for us there. That Grampus always was a damned unlucky thing. She was fast, I allow; but it was because she was sparred too heavy. By the Hokum! what a clew she spread! her main boom, young gentlemen, was—*ninety-foot-long*! Well, she was over-sparred, and she was all cut away below, so she had no bearin's, and her battery was too heavy for her, and we had fired away most of our ammynition, and eat up our pork and hard tack, and drunk up our

water—what comes out of the hold goes over the bows, you know—till she was as empty below as a waister's scouse-pan at one bell. By the Boot! but I was scared of her, young man as I was. I ricollect it well.

"We was joggin' along with a light breeze on the port beam and sheets eased off, and the north coast jest in sight to leeward, and dreamin' of no danger. Young gentlemen, I am ashamed to own it, but a squall got up in the southwest, and come on us, and capsized us, and nobody seen it till it was close aboard. Every fool aboard was lookin' to wind'ard or nowhere. The first I know'd I heard the sails flop. 'Breeze a dyin' out,' thinks I, and looks to wind'ard. Everything was still and the sky was clear there, but I couldn't account for losin' the breeze so sudden, and I felt uneasy. But I didn't have time to mickerate long, for while I was starin' I felt a cold puff on the back o' my neck. I turned around quick, and good Lord! there it was not three cables lengths off, on the lee quarter, by the Piper! a livin' mass of white foam with a gray cloud over it, racin', bilin' along straight for us. 'Look to leeward!' I hollered to the mate that had the deck. 'Hard a larboard!' he yells. 'Flow the head sheets! haul over the boom, Thick, for God's sake!' I wasn't waitin' for no orders then, though. I was there before he spoke, and two other men with me. We might 'a saved her, for the head sheets was gone and she was a wonderful craft to luff, always, but jest as the boom was amidships—young gentlemen, let this be your lesson. Don't neglect little things, or the day may come when you'll suddenly find 'em big. A little thing cost the United States the schooner Grampus. A reef point had worked loose in the eyelet right over the sheet block, and some fool had been amusin' himself by pullin' it through as fur as he could and leavin' the end hang down. It was jest long enough to choke the luff o' the boom sheet, when we had got the boom amidships and begun to heave it over to larboard. Two inches shorter and it would 'a gone clear. I tried to pull it out

but it was jammed so tight in the shell, I didn't have time enough. The squall struck her, and over she went at one turn, clean over, keel up, perfectly turned turtle.

"As luck would have it, we had got both our big boats in the waist that mornin' to caulk and paint 'em, for they was leakin' bad; and they was all caulked tight as bottles when the schooner was knocked down and layin' loose on deck. As luck would have it again, they was both launched clear, so most of the men in the water got to 'em soon, and hung on. They managed to upright 'em, and get in, and bale 'em out, while they was driftin' away. I lost sight of 'em directly in the rain, and when the squall blowed off clear again, they was clean gone.

"I never got in the water at all, but as she turned, kep' a-runnin' up the top side of her, till she give two or three wallows, and stopped, and I found myself a settin' on her keel, scrapin' acquaintance with the barnacles. The bloody beast! But by the Hokum! I was glad jest then she hadn't done no worse. First thing I see was men a-crawl-in' up the weather side of her bottom, which they done easy enough, and them to leeward, tryin' to get up and droppin' back, ker splush! Then I see a man, Tom Teel, a chummy o' mine—I thought a heap o' that man—he's dead now—died of the fever on the west coast of Africky in the Somers—and he was a strong swimmer. He was about four or five fathoms to leeward, tryin' to fight up against the wind. He was a losin' a little, all the time, and couldn't 'a done as well as he done but he got some advantage from the lee of the hull. I see him open his mouth, and I know'd he was hailin' me; but though he had a powerful' voice, I couldn't hear nothin' for the roarin' o' the wind. I jest put my hand across my mouth for a sign to him not to waste his wind hollerin', and I looked around for somethin' to heave him. By Gash! but I was glad when I see a line washed and blowed up high enough for me to reach it. It was one of the boat falls and a plenty of it. I hove the end to Tom and had him aboard in less time than it took

Mr. Munson to carry away the launch's topmast on the main-yardarm coming alongside with the liberty-men in Santa Cruz.

"Then we got the rest of the fellows to leeward up and counted heads. It was awful to think that inside of her the men that had no warnin' was dyin' so nigh us, right under us, and we unable to help 'em. We had nothin' to cut through her bottom with, and if we had we wouldn't 'a done it for she would 'a sunk right under us in five minutes. All that kep her up, she was so tight the air in her couldn't come through her seams but slow.

"Well, we set on her keel three days and nights. It fell dead calm, and there we set burnin' up in the sun, starvin,' dyin' for a drink o' water, and the big goggle-eyed sharks a-cruisin' around slow and easy, right close aboard. Every little while one of 'em would poke his ugly flat nose against the side of the schooner, and look at us solemn, as much as to say, 'Take your time—you're my meat.' By the Hokum! they made me half-crazy. I wanted a dozen good lances to give 'em a taste of my quality with. And there we set three days and nights, and her a settlin' steady, sir, and the little blubbers comin' up from her seams every roll."

Just here Mr. Young gave a giggle. Turning to him, Thick asked severely, "Might I inquire what you are laughin' at, sir?"

"At the little blubbers," answered Young, with another snicker.

"If you had 'a been there you wouldn't laugh. It's thirty odd year ago and I never felt like laughin' yet, when I ricollect it. Them blubbers was our certain death if nothin' come to take us off, and we know'd it."

"I didn't mean anything," apologized Young.

"Shake hands on it, Mr. Young. You're a little too fond of your fun, but I know you're a good-intentioned young officer. Well," he resumed, "we *was* took off, or I shouldn't be a-drinkin' your grog to-night, young gentle-

men. A —— greasy little Spanish brig, though I oughtn't to say anything against her, seein' what she done for us— she picked us up, and the Grampus went down three hours afterward and us *off* of her. So you know she wouldn't a kep' up much longer with us *on* her. We run into the Havana, and there was most of the rest, officers and all. There was only eleven lost."

"Well, bosen, we are much obliged, and will let you off your *yarn*. But tell us how you were reminded of this accident by my calling you a tough tar," said Larkin.

"Oh, that's plain enough," responded Thick, with simplicity. "An officer ought to be tough and able to stand most anything. And he needs picklin' too. It takes a deal o' soakin' in brine to make a prime officer. Look at Mr. Garnet, now."

"Where does the pickling come in?" asked Munson.

"Why, wasn't we in a pretty pickle on the schooner's bottom?" The mids declared that he had perfectly supplied the missing link in the chain of sequent deductions.

Then they drank the health of Dry Bob the Gunner, but failed to get a story out of him. He declared that his junk was all on charge, but promised to have a yarn ready before the next time.

"Bosen," asked Robinson, "were you ever on the coast of Africa?"

"One cruise, in the Adams," replied Thick, "and I'm thankful it's no more. It's nasty work hangin' around the mouths o' them black muddy rivers, watchin' for slavers. First you know, all hands is getting the fever, and then there's nothing for it but to run to sea till it blows out of the ship. I pray the Lord never to send me on that station again, by the hokum!"

"Isn't it awful hot there?" asked Smith.

"Hot! It's meltin'. I've seen the master tryin' to get a meridian, and the sextant melted, leavin' nothin' but the handle in his hand, and the metal run down inside his coat-sleeve and burnt it all to blazes. I see a man sweat so

much he was all dried up, and from one hundred and fifty he didn't weigh but fifty pounds. We had to lay him on a board and carry him—'fraid to touch him, lest he'd crumble like a pie-crust. The doctor made him drink two quarts o' soup with wine in it, and hung him over the quarter to soak. I see a man go to sleep in the shade, and the sun got on to his legs, and when he woke up they was cooked clean to his knees. We had a little dog aboard, and that man got no peace of his life afterward for the dog's following him about the decks, snippin' and bitin' at his trousers legs, tryin' to get at the roasted meat."

"Avast heaving, bosen!" "Come down a snake!" "Heave and pawl!" "Take a turn!" "Choke his luff!"—cried out the laughing youngsters.

When their noise had somewhat diminished, Godolphin solemnly spoke. "Mr. Thick, you must'nt expect *me* to believe all that."

"As you please, Mr. Porp. I generally puts things, and leaves 'em to the power of my hearers' minds."

"But, bosen," said Munson, "I know it is thundering hot down there. How do the men stand to work in the sun?"

"They couldn't stand it. The men is always spared the heavy work. They hire the niggers—Kroomen, they call 'em, cause they use 'em for the time bein' as *crews*—to do all the boat work and a good deal of the rest. Them niggers is a sweet-scented set; d—d dish-faced, pitcher-mouthed, bench-legged fellows, with ears like saddle-skirts and noses like a baboon. They've all got names, too. Every mother's son of 'em is named John, and lots of 'em is called Friday. I know'd one named Christmas, and one was Easter, and we named one Fourth of July. He was mightily pleased with it—thought it was pretty, and it was too good for that black rascal. Fourth of July stole a pair of my breeches, —— him! There was all the bells—One Bell, Two Bells, and so on—and John Sheepshanks and Bowline-on-the-bight, and Flemish Hoss, and Bottle o'

Beer. Bottle o' Beer was a general favorite. He was head man and tol'able honest—for a nigger."

"I reckon mighty few of those fellows are so honest but they'll find a hotter climate than even the coast of Africa hereafter," said Munson.

"Don't know about that," replied the boatswain. "Some no 'count will make — good angels, to my way o' thinking."

"Coal black angels with woolly wings, eh?" said Larkin, comically. "Quoth the raven, 'it's agin my principles.' Come, fill up, fellows."

"You'd better not laugh so loud," cautioned the gunner. "You recollect that night?"

"That's so, young gentlemen," said Thick. "Mr. McKizick will stand a good deal, specially on a Saturday night, but you must expect his patience to give out some time."

"Ah, William," cried one of the young rogues, "I know what's the matter. You recollect how Idle Bob was about to get the best of you, and you don't want to tackle him again."

"I know you young gentlemen got the better of us both, and I felt like a fool with the first luff talkin' to me. You can't play that trick twice."

Then the whole crowd turned on Harrison, and tried to get him to challenge Thick to finish the match. At first he gave no better answer than to sit smiling at them, then he said, "Thick's too strong. I'm afraid of him. He could knock a fly a mile." They left off urging, and Thick asked Young to sing that song about the Sailor Boy's Good-by.

"Want to hear it, fellows?"

"Yes." "Fire away, Young!" "Pipe up!" came from the party.

So encouraged he sang a short little song, with the old sentiment and stereotyped words about the sailor boy, and home, and friends, and sweetheart, and farewell, and roll-

ing ocean, and bright anticipations of returning with fame and cash. The music was fair, and the voice sweet, and all enjoyed it.

As soon as he finished, Thick began, without invitation, a dolorous ditty. He sang in the old lee-gangway style, droning out the words, and increasing, by the severity of his yellow visage, the effect of an air already sufficiently sad. The whole thing was irresistibly comic.

“Come, all ye landsmen, stout and bold,
I’ll bowse your attentions chock-a-block;
I’ll sing you a story oft’s been told,
The loss of the old Peacock.

“Now steady, my boys, the captain cried,
Keep silence fore and aft.
I’m sure it would, do you good,
To see him work the craft.”

So far he got, when Young, unable to control himself, let out the end of a laugh; and instantly all hands broke into a roar. The noise was so great, that all of them thought of McKizick at once, and the stream of sound ceased suddenly, cut off by the moral spigot. But dread of the first luff, and unwillingness to hurt Thick’s feelings, were not enough together to prevent the sputterings of fun which escaped from several, as they recalled the boatswain’s solemn face and creaking voice. He looked very indignant for an instant, and then softened, saying that “Young gentlemen would have their laugh at anything.” He even tried to join in, but did not enjoy it, and only got into the dry grins.

Mr. Young relieved him.

He rose to his feet, rather exhilarated, and proposed as a toast, “The downfall of the barbarious Moors!”

“Yes,” said Thick, sighing deeply, and wiping his mouth. “Yes, d—n ’em, they have been much damage to us. Do you know where the ship is goin’, Mr. Larkin?”

Larkin took a chart down off the lockers, and unrolled it. They all gathered around the table, from which the spilled punch was wiped with an improvised swab—the

inner side of a pea-jacket—before the chart was spread out. It was a very imperfect one, showing but few of the shoals and rocks. The Cobre was pointed out as their centre of operations; but though the river was known to be navigable for several miles, there were no soundings laid down, and no indications given by which it could be entered.

When they had finished looking at it, Young, who was slightly confused by the liquor he had drunk, and was under the impression that he ought to reply to his own toast with a story, began: "I could tell how the barbarious Moors fetched it all in my head, as well as the bosen did awhile ago—"

"All what, old man?"

"Why!" looking about surprised. "This story I'm going to tell."

"All right!" "Heave ahead!" "Trip and cast her!" "Hoist away the flying-jib!" exclaimed the chorus.

"It was last summer, when I was in the receiving-ship at Philadelphia," he began, "the captain, old Maskelyne—Maskelyne's dad, you know, fellows—lived in the spar-deck cabin. Reckon you've all heard what a careful old codger he is—has his quart'-deck midshipmen in to report the weather three times every night. Used to have to do it sometimes, myself. He was awful hard to wake up, old Maskelyne—used to have to shake him and roll him in the bed, he! he! Then he'd wake up on a sudden and roar out, '*Who in ——'s that?*' Golly! I was scared the first time. I found out all you had to do was to sing out how the weather was and walk out.

"Old Maskelyne's two nieces come aboard one day—Maskelyne's cousins you know—such pretty girls—'bout seventeen. Oh, me." He stopped and sighed. "Fellows, let's drink Susan Maskelyne's health—Susan's my sweetheart—Sat'd'y night, you know?"

The middies were all a little elevated by this time, and acceded very willingly. "Fellow-citizens!" cried Larkin,

“the health ’f her who reigns s’preme ’n the bosom of our frien’—Miss Susan Maskelyne!”

Young went on: “Thank you, fellows. ’S kind o’ you. Well, they were both aboard, Susan and Annie, and I had to show ’em the ship, and then old Maskelyne had me in the cabin, to play with ’em, he said; but we did better’n that, and I saw a heap of ’em, and I flatter myself I made a good impression. That evening it come on to blow strong up the river, and raised a chopping sea for the Delaware, and the girls were afraid to go ashore, so the captain told ’em he’d put ’em in a bed aboard, and they were tickled to death at the idea of sleeping aboard a man-of-war. But I didn’t know anything about their being aboard—honor bright—I thought they had gone ashore.

“I had the middle watch, and I was walking with the officer of the deck, and he was spinning me a yarn, and suddenly at five bells says he, ‘Mr. Young, the captain left orders to report the weather at four bells. Get in as quick’s you play!’ So I ran aft, and by the sentry at the cabin door. He said something to me, but I paid no attention, I was in such a hurry. I went right in the captain’s state-room, and took him by the shoulder as usual, and begun to shake him like a bunch of oakum. Thinks I, ‘he shakes very easy to-night.’ Then he stirred, and I knew that was the right time to catch him, and I commenced to report, ‘Wind dying out, and it’s raining hard,’ and golly! such a screech! ‘Ow! *ow!* ow!’ I nearly jumped out of my skin, but I held on to him. The orderly came in with the deck-lantern just then, and there I was with my hand on Susan’s shoulder, and Annie sitting up in the bed screaming, and Susan screaming too, and me in my oil-skin looking foolish and dripping on the carpet, and the beast of a marine holding the light up, and the worst of it all was old Maskelyne woke up and come over. You know how fat he is, and he has the rheumatism, and he had on a long red flannel night-gown, and he looked bloody. Says he, ‘You young scoundrel, what are you

doing in my nieces' room?' and he came near lambasting me before I could explain it. That beast of a sentry! he ought to have stopped me. I fell in love with Susan the minute he brought in the light and I saw who it was; but she never would let me explain, and I know she hates me. I tell you what, fellows, a fellow feels queer when he finds he's got the wrong pig by the ear, and is shaking a pretty girl, instead of the old man."

"A pretty girl," said Thick, musingly. "I don't deny she was, but, young gentlemen, you should 'a seen my wife when we was married. There's nothin' to tell her looks but a piece o' poetry I watched one o' the men writin' on the fokesel paint-work with a lead pencil. I was goin' to report him, but it was so pretty I let him off when he told me he made it up himself.

" 'The rose is red,
The violet's blue,
Sugar's sweet,
And so is she.'

"That's her number. Young gentlemen, you will never know what true comfort is till you get married. I approve of all of you havin' sweethearts—reg'lar, decent sweethearts, I mean—at home where you live, and not goin' on forever like Mr. Hartley and Mr. Garnet is doin', with no concern for the future. You all marry as soon as you can. If you can get a good wife, marry as soon as you're passed. I have seen a good deal of the service, and I know it saves much for an officer to marry young. Isn't that so, Harrison?" said he, appealing to the gunner.

"Sometimes it is."

"Always so, always. Now I'm only a bosen, and never will be anything more, and jest look at my house. I own every stick of it, and the land, too, and I can raise cabbage between cruises, if it comes in the summer time."

Thick went on and gave a full history of his house, from its first conception in his mind, when he was 'in the States

frigate round the Horn,' down to the time the last piece of furniture was put into it. He told them how he 'wouldn't have no cellar dug, but jest done it himself, after the house was built.' How he 'couldn't get the dirt out handy, and rove a double Spanish burton, and hooked the block to the basket so he could bowse it out without stirring from under the house, empty it with a spilling-line, and overhaul the burton with the same, to bring the basket back for another load.' How the basket wore out and he 'had to borry a wheelbarry.' How there was a gully on one side of his big gate, which caused wagons coming in to 'take a rank sheer to starboard and nigh capsize,' and how he wheeled dirt and filled it up. He advised them, when their future wives were secured, to be kind and attentive. "Don't run about too much nights, gentlemen, the women don't like it. I'm a mason, and I have to 'tend the lodge when I'm home, but my wife never did like me to go though I always manage to be in by two bells. There a brother died—he was a shoemaker—and I couldn't get away from the lodge till five bells, and when I got home it was nigh six bells. And there was my wife, *settin' up!* She set up all that time for me. Says she, 'William, we've been married seven year, and I never know'd you to stay out later than nine o'clock before.' Says I, 'I know it, Mary Ann; and I'm sorry for it.'" From all Thick's account she must have been a notable housekeeper and a bit of a shrew.

Most of this time the middies had been more interested in the fast-ebbing bowl of punch, and in shooting bits of hard bread at Porp, who was sound asleep, and wheezing in the corner, than in Thick's talk. It was getting so late they dared not make any noise, though all more or less inebriated, but when Thick began to relate the manner and incidents of his courtship they all listened again. He told first how he met the young woman, and scared away a rival with his brass-buttons; and then the course of his true love ran smooth as he carried the story along to where

Mary Ann had accepted him, and he had only the opposition of the old folks to encounter.

“You see, young gentlemen, they hated soldiers, and like a pair of fools, though I shouldn’t like Mary Ann to hear me say so, they put me into the same category. I argued with ’em, but ’twas no use. They said I wore the clothes and took the government pay, and I was no better nor a fightin’ pauper, livin’ off o’ poor folks ashore; and sailors never had no principles, nohow. So the thing was a standin’ so, and Mary Ann vowin’ she’d wait till they was both dead before she’d give me up, when I got my orders to the Adams for the West Coast. I goes to her and I says, ‘Mary Ann, I am ordered to the coast of Africky!’ The poor thing, she turned as pale as fresh paint-work. Says she, ‘Oh William!’ says she—it was all she could say. Then I told her how she stood a good chance o’ seein’ me no more, and how she must marry me that evenin’, for I had to go off to Portsmouth in a schooner that was to sail next mornin’; ‘I will,’ said she, and I know’d she’d do it. So I told her to pretend to go out before supper to see a friend o’ hern, and get her friend and walk around to the Methodist church, and I’d have a preacher primed to splice us. She promised, and all she said against it was she wished she had a chance to fix her clothes up better before she was married. I got my things aboard the schooner, and I see the preacher and made it all right with him; and then I waited mighty impatient till six o’clock, and went around to the church with a chummy o’ mine. Mary Ann was there, and we was spliced in a jiffy, and a good, smooth, long splice it was, young gentlemen. She cried a bit, but I cheered her up as we walked toward the house. There was three rooms in it on the ground floor. The old folks slep up stairs, and Mary Ann’s room was the back one below. When she got home she begun cryin’ again, and I couldn’t stop her. I told her she would wake the old folks up, but she vowed she didn’t care—she was my wife anyhow, but when

would she ever see me again! I jest told her I wasn't gone yet, and so long as she was my wife, I could see no reason for goin' before mornin'. Well, young gentlemen, if a gal is really fond of a man, she will keep him alongside on most any terms.

"Her pa heard us come in and go in her room, and he come down stairs and wanted to turn me out, but I advised him to go back to his wife, and leave me alone with mine. I showed him the stifferkit, and told him if he didn't get out I'd put him out, and he went off. I see no more of him for three years.

"Next mornin' by day I was aboard the schooner, helpin' get her under way; but before I left I give Mary Ann three hundred dollars, and told her she should have more, for I would leave her a 'lotment o' my pay, and she had the law on her side, and if they troubled her jest to take board and live separate. When my wife's pa and ma see the money, they treated her wonderful polite. I declare, I thought that cruise on the coast was the longest cruise I ever see. By the Boot!"

"How long 'go was this, bos'n?" asked Larkin.

"Seventeen year ago, this month."

Larkin tipped a tippy wink to the other mids, and went on: "Got 'ny chil'r'n, bos'n?"

"Two, as fine as you ever see," replied Thiek.

"How old are they, bosen?" asked Smith, who had caught the wink.

"I see what you're steerin' for very well, young gentlemen. My daughters is sixteen year and three months, and thirteen year and three months; and thankful I am they is of the age they ought to be."

"Gennlem'n," said Larkin frowning, "on'y one more glass 'piece. F'lup! Gennlem'n, healt' 'sting'sht 'oman.

" 'Rose red,
Vil'ts blue,
Sugar's sweet,
So's she."

Ha! Ha! Ha! Great'n good 'oman. Wife 'f our frien'—Miss Fick!"

The boatswain appeared flattered by this mark of attention.

The party got out pipes and cigars, and with uncertain steps went forward under the swinging hammocks to their smoking-place, leaving Porp wheezing noisily in the corner. They received sundry maledictions on the way, from seamen whom they awakened by attempting to stand up straight when directly underneath them. Young was about the furthest gone, though even he was not too full for utterance. "Mr. Young," said Thick, as the men grumbled at being disturbed, "if any of these United States seamen offer to punch you in the eye, tell 'em you've jest been punched in the bread locker, and they'll let you alone."

"Sh'up!" replied Young, feebly. "Your voice too fick for jokin'."

CHAPTER XIII.

ON the following morning the usual preparations for Sunday inspection were made. The decks were washed clean before breakfast; and the warm sun and wind had almost dried them by eight bells, when the men sat down around their tarpaulin table-cloths to eat the morning scouse. The scene on the Fish's spar-deck at that hour was pleasant. Everything was as neat and nice as it well could be. The rigging was laid down for running, the paint was milky white after its scrubbing, the bright-work shone brilliantly, and the sails by their close sheet-home, taut leeches, and perfect trimming, bore witness to Garnet's care. The men sat in groups, *à la turque*, around the mess-cloths, grubbing away with good appetites, and for the most part in silence. Captain Merritt came up on the quarter-deck, looked about and aloft, well-satisfied, and went down to his breakfast.

By degrees, as the men finished their meal, a confused noise of talking, laughing, and jesting uprose; and to this Babelish sound was soon added the clatter of the tinware, as the mess-cooks cleared off the cloths. The men felt well. They had finished the heavy part of Sunday's work, and they had a good loaf in prospect. Their stomachs were full, and they were enjoying their pipes while they put on their best clothes in a sunshine bright enough to make a hypochondriac happy; and they were now on their cruising ground, and were hoping soon to have the excitement without which it is impossible for sailors to live.

In the steerage, a party of dismal youngsters assembled round the table with aching heads, made a very light breakfast. They were penitent, and thought "sweet-hearts and wives" a poor affair. Larkin "believed he'd swear off." Young said he would too; but Maskelyne, who had escaped a headache by having his watch to keep the night before, laughed at them, and told them they would feel badly next Saturday night when they broke their oaths.

"Better put in only a quart next time. Larkin made it too good for you."

As no one replied it may be presumed the amendment was accepted.

In the ward-room also, there was a silent party. Briggs was looking bloated and puffy about the eyes as a consequence of his mid-watch the night before. Hartley was hurrying to finish his breakfast, and relieve Garnet. Robbins was apparently affected in the same manner as the midshipmen, though he had kept Saturday night alone in his state-room, and with no reference to the ladies in his deep potations. Doctor Bobus's solid remarks received so little attention that he became silent, and the rest were not great talkers at any time. They were all oppressed with the sensation of a bore, which had soon to be endured, the Sunday morning inspection. It was a wearying nuisance in itself, and made necessary a good deal of troublesome

preparation. *Item*, shaving, rendered a tedious and delicate operation by the lively motion of the ship. *Item*, a complete clean rig, from head to foot. *Item*, shirt buttons to look after, clothes to have brushed, and shoes to have polished by the lazy servants. Then the inspection itself. It was tiresome to stand stock still, while the captain satisfied himself of the cleanliness of every man, and of each part of the ship. Then would come the articles of war, and then the captain would read the Episcopal service to all hands.

They were not to be so much bored as they expected however.

During the inspection, the captain had paused in a gun division to sternly contemplate a powder-monkey, a lank yellow-faced boy, with enormous ears, who answered in the ship to the appropriate nickname of "Dirty." He had finished the examination, before which Dirty shrank as usual, had given an order to Mr. McKizick to have "that boy cleaned," and was about to start on; when a long-drawn, far-away, musical cry quavered through the ship. "Sai-i-i-il, ho-o-o!"

It was the lookout on the fore-topsail yard. Every man on board started involuntarily at the sound.

"Where away?" bawled Dularge, who in his capacity as ex-master had the deck.

"Dead ahead, sir," was the answer.

"Can you make her out?"

"Topsail schooner, sir," replied the lookout.

"How is she standing?"

"Hove-to, sir."

The captain heard, and went on more rapidly to complete the inspection. "Beat the retreat, sir, and let's have a look at this fellow," he said, when they had finished the official tour.

The drum's quick note sounded out, the men standing perfectly still in their places, until the last tap. Then, in a moment, the silence and order were lost in a general breaking up. All below rushed on deck to see the strange

vessel. Sails were not so plenty fifty years ago as now, in those waters, and every body expected news, at least, from the schooner.

The stranger was in plain sight from the deck, about four miles away, right ahead. At that distance the eye could not disengage more details from the mass than that her spars appeared very long and that she was hove to.

The wind was light from the north, off the land, and the Fish was moving but slowly. At the present rate of progress she could not expect to reach the schooner in less than an hour and a half. The captain got out in the weather quarter-boat and examined her long and carefully; but, apparently dissatisfied with his observation, he sent Burke to the foretop-gallant mast-head, giving him his own glass. Burke returned directly. "She's a topsail schooner, sir, not like the common run o' coasters. Lookout says she run from behind the p'int and backed her taupsle. She's got a boat ashore on the key."

Every body by this time was full of the excitement of expectation, officers and men alike watching the schooner and making conjectures.

"McKizick," said the captain, "come in the cabin and let's look at the chart. It would be a fine thing if we had flushed our bird already.

"Aye," answered the first lieutenant, as he descended the ladder, "but he's flushed out o' gunshot. I'd rather see him a cable's length abeam, with the hands at their quarters."

"So would I, for that matter," said the captain, walking into the cabin. "And I'm thinking we won't be so lucky as to get him in that situation very soon. Well," he continued, sitting down at a table on which the chart was spread, and pointing out the plotted position of the ship, "here's where we were at seven. Course west by south, nine knots—puts us *here*." He made a dot with the pencil. "Let's see how it agrees with the bearings. South point of El Cáyó del Pescadór bears west, one-

half south. Mount Alforjas, northwest by north, three quarters north. Very near. A little southwesterly current, I think."

"Let's see about where that schooner is," asked McKizick.

"Just about here," replied the captain, indicating the spot with his pencil. "If he would lie still, we would be up at six bells. Let's go on deck."

The ship continued to approach the stationary schooner slowly, very slowly it seemed to the eager men, though every minute brought her more plainly in sight. Nearer and nearer she came, as the dragging minutes went by. Now she was within three miles. Another long twenty minutes and it was only two. The schooner's boat could now be seen lying up on the beach and the forms of men could be made out near by. Aboard the Flying Fish all were filled by a common impatience and a common fear of seeing the stranger vessel fill away and stand off; and now they began to wonder why she did not go. There was a presentiment of adventure on board: a craft looking so much out of the common must be something out of the common.

And still they draw nearer. Now she is within a mile and three quarters. "McKizick, let the people shift into working blue," orders the captain. The order goes to Hartley, who has the deck, and in a minute the boatswain's mates are passing the word, "Hear there, fore and aft, shift yourselves in working blue!" The men rush below for their clothes bags, reappearing directly, one by one, much more plainly dressed in their substantial working suits. All the good watching places are quickly filled again. Now they are within a mile and a half, and the crew becomes highly eager. "We're in shot of her!" "Why don't we blaze away at her?" "Why don't the old man send us to quarters?" and such like expressions are heard all around. They watch the captain now as much as they do the suspicious schooner.

"You may send the men to quarters and open the magazine, McKizick," says the captain at last. "Don't beat the drum."

"I'll relieve you, Mr. Hartley," says McKizick, walking to him rapidly and taking the deck-trumpet. "Go to your quarters!" he orders. "Mr. Briggs, open the magazine. Boy! tell the master-at-arms to send everybody to quarters, and then tell the officers."

At the first sound of his voice the men flew to the guns, and took their stations. "Cast loose and provide!" commanded McKizick. The ship assumed at once an aspect of bustle and confusion which looked little like what it in reality was—a result of organization and drill. In three minutes the work was done, the men ranged motionless in their stations, the last officer had reported his division ready for action, and the ship was as still as the death she menaced.

By this time the schooner was about a mile off, and as distance always seems much shorter over the water than on shore, she appeared very near. The men on her deck were as impatient as the seamen of the sloop, to judge by their hurried, anxious movements. Every few seconds the faint sound of a shout came over the interlying water to the Fish. The men on the beach had launched their boat, and sat in her with their oars poised, seemingly waiting. Occasionally they gave a few strokes, to keep her from drifting ashore in the light surf.

"Keep away a little, McKizick, and try him with the bow-gun. Aim outside of him," ordered Captain Merritt, who wanted to try whether the schooner was within easy range, and give her commander an intimation that he had better remain where he was.

"Boom!" went the gun. The shot sailed through the air, a lessening black speck, and dropped in the water short, and far to the left. Hardly did the fountain of spray which it threw up fall again, than the schooner was seen to brace round her topsail-yard, and stand directly

toward the sloop. A low murmur of disappointment was heard among the crew.

"Why, he's all right." "He's standin' down to speak to us." "He's no pirate." "He's comin' alongside!"

They were shortly to be undeceived, for the stranger soon luffed up, and backed her topsail again, this time heaving to, very near her boat.

As she came to the wind, two men appeared over the crest of a sand hillock on the key, and ran down to the beach, carrying a box between them. They reached the shore, ran into the water to meet the boat, lifted the box into her, and jumped in themselves. The four men at the oars gave way powerfully, and sent their boat swiftly through the water toward the schooner, one of those who had come down with the box, standing up in the stern, bending his body in time with the stroke, and waving his cap as if to encourage the rowers to greater exertions. Two minutes sufficed to put them alongside. They sprang on board, and the boat seemed to follow them at once, so quickly did she rise from the water. She was hoisted with marvellous quickness in the pilot-boat way. At the same time the schooner's main sheet was eased off, and her topsail braced sharp aback. She spun round on her heel, and as her head came southwest, her topsail was braced full, and her head-sheets drawn; and she instantly shot away in that direction.

"Open on him, McKizick; elevate all you can, and fire coolly," ordered the captain.

"Aye, aye, sir," responded the first lieutenant heartily.

"Mr. Dularge, flow the main-sheet, and brail up the spanker! Up helm! Prime! Point!" he called, the last two orders down the main hatch in a stentorian voice, echoed by the officers of the divisions. "Fifteen hundred yards! train sharp for'd! Keep her south, quartermaster."

The orders were rapidly obeyed, while the ship paid

off, and then all was still again. McKizick raised his powerful voice once more.

"Gun captains, take your time pointing, and don't waste the shot! Aim at the hull!"

Meanwhile the schooner, which had been within three-quarters of a mile when she filled away, was plainly increasing her distance. The ship was now steady on her new course, and running faster for being so much off the wind.

"Commence firing!"

Instantly the guns began to go off irregularly from different parts of the ship; first one, then five or six nearly together, then a pause, then the rest of the broadside. The ship jarred and vibrated to her keel, and the light spar-deck waved with the heavy concussions, which were enough to stun an unaccustomed ear. The captain eagerly watched the effect of the discharge, and as soon as he could see through the smoke, looked exceedingly blank. Directly the guns were reloaded, and another broadside followed, even more irregular than the first. From that time gun followed gun at unequal intervals, each firing independently of everything but the quickness of its crew. The captain kept his glass on the schooner for a few minutes, then shut it with a vexed emphasis, and turning to McKizick said sharply:

"Cease firing, sir; he'll think we're playing with him. Make sail, sir. Southwest, quartermaster."

"Cease firing!" ordered McKizick. "On deck everybody, to make sail!"

The schooner had now very materially increased her distance. The only visible effect of the sloop's fire was a single hole in the mainsail; neither the other sails, nor the spars, nor the hull, showing any marks of shot. The gun captains had all been too eager and hurried.

"Starboard stunsels ready for setting! Keep fast the lower stunsel!" commanded McKizick, as the crew swarmed up from below. In a few minutes the topmast and topgallant studding-sails were up, each being set as rapidly as possible, and without waiting on the others.

The effect of these large additional sails, standing out like wings to windward, was at once felt. The ship's speed increased, and she seemed for awhile to hold her own with the schooner. Though this was not the case, for the smaller vessel had every advantage in the light wind and smooth sea, she appeared to take an alarm. An enormous light lib ran up on board her, and her main-topmast stay-sail was also set. This increase of her sail power placed the relative speed of the two vessels as it had been at first. The schooner gained fast; and it was evident that nothing but an accident could bring her within gunshot again. On that chance Captain Merritt kept up the pursuit.

After the guns were secured, the captain had the men who fired them sent on the quarter-deck. "My lads," said he, addressing them: "This is a poor start. In picking you out to command the guns you were credited with some coolness. You have all been to sea before and ought to know better than to throw away shot in that foolish fashion. Remember hereafter not to fire without first making sure of your aim, *if it takes you an hour*. That'll do."

"Did anybody make her name out?" he asked, turning to McKizick.

The first lieutenant called Burke, him of the hawk eye, knowing that what he had failed to see, all had. "What was her name, Burke?"

"I don't know, sir," answered Burke, in a tone which implied he thought himself negligent and was sorry for it. "There was two parts of it. The first was *Lay*, but I couldn't make the other out. Think it begun with an H, sir."

"That's it, McKizick. I was sure she was our craft before, but that settles it," said Captain Merritt. "Well, we've nothing to do but to keep her in sight as long as we can. Keep a bright look out on her."

All the afternoon the schooner kept on gaining, till she was only a dim speck in the horizon; and before the sun set she had disappeared altogether. Still Captain Merritt

kept on, bringing the ship by the wind at dark, and not placing the usual sidelights. He hoped the pirate might try to run back between the Flying Fish and the shore, and that by hauling up she might be intercepted. But no sight of ghostly sail or gliding hull rewarded the eyes of the keen watchers.

Next morning the ship was alone, with nothing in view but the distant mountains of Cuba. The captain gave up the chase as useless, and headed back toward the mouth of the river Cobre, which lies five miles west of El Cáyó del Pescadór. The wind, which had been light before, slowly grew fainter, at the same time backing gradually into the west.

The ship was about half-way to the key, when an accident occurred which shows the necessity of the constant watchfulness of mariners. It has been said that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. At sea it is the price of life.

Mr. Dularge had the deck for the afternoon watch. He strutted up and down, delighted with the gentle breeze, which could awaken no anxiety and occasion no labor. In fact, it was only strong enough to fan him pleasantly. He paid no more attention to the weather than he did to the sails, allowing his indolent mind to loll in the slough of vacancy. He did not notice a gradual massing of clouds in the north over the land, though it went on for hours, the volume and appearance of the bank becoming continually more and more threatening. Johnson, the quartermaster of the watch, saw the gathering danger from the start, but he would not warn Dularge, because the foolish young man had taken him to task for presuming to do so once before. The consequence was, that Dularge continued to parade up and down the deck in all the blissful security of ignorance, until the men on deck were casting alternately looks of amazement at him, and of fear at the approaching squall. Their expressed thought would have been in some such vigorous language as this: "Yon's a hell of a squall rising, and that damned fool hasn't seen it." But the dis-

cipline of the service had become so much of a second nature to them that, although they knew their lives to be in danger, they hesitated to speak to their superior on the subject. A number of the petty officers and the older seamen found themselves, they did not know how, together on the forecastle at this juncture. They sent a messenger, the captain of the after-guard, to ask why Ap Jones would not point out the squall to the officer of the deck. The messenger returned directly with the word that "Ap said it was none of his business, and he wasn't going to be damned again for putting his eyes in a fool's head, and Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones was a different sort o' man to that." This set the old sailors to thinking very actively for the good of the service. The result was that they almost forced an unwilling gray-headed boat-swain's mate to speak to Dularge, at the last minute.

That officer knew there must be something of interest to hear, from the unusual circumstance of a shipped man approaching him when he was on duty: therefore he paid an amiable and strict attention. His placidity quickly left him on hearing the message and looking to the northward.

His first agitated order was, "Boy! tell the captain to come on deck! Stand by to take in the stunsels! Hurry up, will you!"

The men sprang to man the necessary gear. They had already without orders quietly prepared everything as far as they could; and, in spite of Dularge's confusion and blunders, the outspreading wings began to fold up and disappear rapidly.

It is a feeling which a landsman cannot comprehend—a sensation that strikes into the very marrow—that thrill which runs through a man when he hears the sudden orders yelled out by a surprised officer of the deck, in some unknown emergency. "Danger—unexpected—he wasn't ready—what is it?" flashes instinctively through the brain; and in the same instant comes an impulse which drives one

to the deck. On this occasion, everybody in the ship, Dr. Bobus included, was up in a moment ; and each one who had a station there, went to it as if all hands had been called.

Dularge was too late. He got the studding sails in, and was clewing down the topgallant sails and royals, when the squall struck the ship fair on the beam. Fortunately the yards were exactly square, and the wind had only the edges of the sails to act upon ; but even with this little surface exposed she heeled over till the muzzles of her lee guns dragged in the water. The fact that the head sails were set, while the mainsail and spanker were in, joined to Johnson's jamming the helm hard up without orders, kept the ship from luffing. Then ensued a scene which words are inadequate to bring fully before the mind of one unfamiliar with the like. The sails shook with a noise like rapid continuous musketry, a mighty flap of the foresail now and then sounding like a great gun, loose blocks rattled, the water boiled and foamed, officers shrieked unintelligible orders, the men worked like giants at the gear, and over and through everything, permeating and inescapable, was the shrill, furious scream of the squall. A blinding flood of rain slanted acutely down, so thick it seemed solid, so swift that the drops stung the faces they struck.

The captain was early on deck, and at once took the trumpet from Dularge, assuming active command himself. It was at the moment the light sails were half in, and the squall was on the ship. He got them in and furled them (at the risk of the lives of the men who could hardly cling to the yards), with the exception of the fore-topgallant sail. The lee sheet of that sail would not render through the sheave, and the clew line was parted in a vain effort to pull it through by main strength. The topgallant mast, carried away at the cap with a crash, at last, hung abaft the top-sail yard by the rigging, an unsightly wreck. Captain Merritt braced the foresail full, and the ship paid off

slowly before the wind, the topsail yards being at the same time clewed down.

By degrees the squall abated, though it still blew in puffs. The captain knew it would be unsafe to haul by the wind while the main-topgallant mast was without any forward support; so, surrendering the deck to the first lieutenant, he gave orders to keep the present course, reef the topsails, clear away the wreck, and get up a new mast as soon as possible. This was done, and the ship close hauled again, but by this time she had run a great distance to the southward.

The breeze remained in the north, but fell away provokingly. The rest of that day, and through the night, and all the next day, they beat up against it. In the afternoon the key was sighted, and shortly afterward a sail was reported in the northwest running across the sloop's track. Though the Flying Fish's people had been of late through too much to be excitable, still there was a great interest, and the sail was closely watched.

The two vessels continued to approach upon converging lines, but it soon became evident that the schooner—such she was now seen to be—was so much the swifter that she would pass the vertex long before the sloop-of-war could reach it. Captain Merritt, thinking the breeze fresher in shore, continued by the wind after La Hembrilla had crossed his bows about two miles ahead. When he reached the wake of the schooner the Flying Fish was kept away and every sail set that would draw.

La Hembrella was fully two miles away and it was nearly sunset. To the surprise of the man-of-war's people, she again hove to, nearly in the former position, and lay there waiting for them, as if in challenge. As she lay, gracefully restrained but seemingly anxious to fly away like a wild bird, rising and falling slowly on the light sea, with the last red sunshine on her sails, she had a peculiar air of tantalizing beauty.

When the ship was about a mile distant a gun was

carefully aimed and fired. The shot fell short and sunk. Without further delay *La Hembrilla* filled her sails, hoisted her vast outer jib, and stood away to the eastward.

The Fish pursued as before, sailing in the light air about two knots to the schooner's three. Captain Merritt would not give it up, however ; for he was not the man to let slip any possible chance of destroying so great an enemy of commerce. Might she not run on a shoal ? or strike a rock ? or spring a leak ? or lose a mast ? or meet with some other of the million accidents of the sea sufficient to diminish her wonderful speed ? It was possible ; and he would feel badly to learn afterward that he had lost a prize by not being at hand to take advantage of fortune.

CHAPTER XIV.

THAT evening there was a party of seamen and petty officers seated and standing on the deck to leeward of the foremast, enjoying the smoking hour and telling stories. The narrations were partly of their own past lives, and partly of what pretended to be the adventures of others. The first kind of stories generally had about them an air of truthfulness which compelled the hearer to believe ; the second-hand yarns, it must be confessed, bore a strong resemblance to myths. Some of these last had obtained a sacredness in the mind of the narrators, ingrained by superstition and long years of repetition. To them the tales were true.

It is no surprising thing that followers of the sea should be superstitious. They are ignorant, in the first place ; and formerly they were much more unlettered than now. Their literature in the olden days was very small, frequently nothing whatever. Confined to themselves in that manner, they fell back upon tradition, the nurse of superstition. They retained among them, altered, of course, to

suit the age, stories as old as the first voyages of Prince Henry, perhaps as old as the commerce of Tyre or the expeditions of Carthage; and these tales continued to pass along by word of mouth from generation to generation of the toilers of the sea.

This old yarn-spinning tendency is now dying out. The influence of science and materialism has entered like light (or poisonous malaria; suit yourself, reader) into almost every nook and cranny in the world: it has affected even the navy. The ocean was once dreaded, and escape from its dangers looked upon as good luck, or as an exercise of clemency on the part of Davy Jones. Now that the mind of man understands, circumvents, even governs the former tyrant, seamen begin to ascribe to that mind a power in all things; and the supernatural recedes into the dim and misty background of the past.

But in addition to strange stories of old days, there were other things that helped, with seamen, to stir the supernatural ferment common to all men's blood into undue activity. There are everywhere some men of an observing cast, who are at the same time impressionable, and who retain their impressions as a part of themselves forever. Such men were in the service as common sailors. To them the ghostly side of their life, their thoughts being otherwise idle, was apt to be often presented; on it they pondered as deeply as men can. The strangeness and isolation of an existence passed so near the inscrutable next life, swaying between sky and earth; the vast circle of the confining horizon; the vagueness of cloud shapes, the mystery of the storm; the unchanging heavens forever gemmed with eyes of watching stars; sombre sunsets; pale moons glimmering upon the waters and filling the ship with mystical effects of murky shadows and phosphoric sails; the white soaring albatross, type of the sleepless wanderer; the little petrels, which flit unseen about vessels at night uttering faint cries like the creaking of spars; the unexplainable sounds to be heard in every ship;—each had its

effect, and, all combined, a resistless effect, upon the men prepared to receive it by nature. They, becoming imbued with ghostliness, gave to the comrades with whom they were in daily contact the same disease.

The group of men in the lee of the foremast sat in one irregular circle, with an opening on each side to allow passers-by to go through without obstruction. In the darkness their faces were not visible, except when some pipe glowed brightly under strong inspiration and illuminated the smoker.

What a pity we cannot treat our minds in the same way, reader, and thus get glory, being "seen of men." No—it would not do. We are so vain that to keep constantly in sight we would soon burn up our little stock of brains, and go out flaring, with stinking smoke. Have we not seen a good writer do this very thing?

The men were Johnson and Burke, the quartermasters; Smiley, the foremastman of the watch; Lewis and Brown, top captains; one of the boatswain's mates; both captains of the forecastle, and several beside.

They naturally fell to talking of La Hembrilla, the vessel they were pursuing at the moment. Let us imagine ourselves in the ship, back fifty years ago, and let us stand where we can hear the talk of the petty officers.

Captain of the Forecastle.—"Burke, what did the Old Man say her name was?"

Burke.—"La Hembrilyer."

Lewis.—"Did you make it aout so!"

Burke.—"Partly."

Lewis.—"Dew tell!"

Burke.—"Done told."

Omnes.—"Ha! ha! ha! Yah! yah! yah!"

Brown 2d.—"Purty good for a beginner, Burke. 'Bout as much chance for us to overhaul that feller as there would be to put the grains into a Mother Carey's chicken."

Boatswain's Mate.—"What makes ye speak o' such a sink as hurtin' the bird, Brown?"

Brown 2d.—"Jest to show how onpossible it is for us to ketch that slippery schooner. Nobody's goin' to hurt her no more'n the bird—to my way o' thinkin'."

Captain of Forecastle.—"Lewis, that was a blamed good shot o' your'n. If we'd a' been a little nigher you'd a' hit the purty little pirate."

Lewis.—"I know'd I couldn't reach her, but I jest wanted ter show 'em we could shoot stret, anyhaow."

Johnson—Ap Jones.—"And it's high time you was a-makin' of 'em think so. 'Nother broadside like that'n o' Sunday, and they'd not be afraid to let us come alongside."

Lewis.—"If all hed fired Sunday es stret as I done to-day we could 'a gone alongside."

Boatswain's Mate.—"Avast, Lewis; you'll be claimin' that hole in her mainsail next thing."

Lewis.—"Of course I claim it. I fired the last gun, ez you all know, and Mr. Do-Small told me he watched my shot, and seen it strike."

Johnson.—"I reckon it was sence the squall he told you that, so as to make you think better of him."

Smiley.—"The officer what couldn't see a squall like that gettin' up in his watch for two hours right before his face, couldn't be depended on to watch a shot, Lewis."

Lewis.—"The mastman thet couldn't see a squall like thet en time to hev his topgallant sheets clear for runnin', and loses the ship a good stick by his blindness, hez no call to jedge of eyesight in anybody."

Smiley.—"You know d—n well, Lewis, the sheet was foul aloft."

Boatswain's Mate.—"Say, you fellows, don't you git mad there. You'll have blue eyes next, and I'll have to eat two o' my chummies to-morrow mornin'."

Ap Jones.—"Laws a-land! what a fool that nigger was!"

Captain of Forecastle.—"Which, Ap!"

Ap Jones.—"That warrant officer's cook—did'nt you hear about him? Well, you know his son, that Jerry

Jingo what helps the midshipmites to shave. He was givin' his daddy some sass at the galley this mornin', and the old fellow he gits the boy by the scruff o' the neck, and paddles him well with a bit o' plank. He 'lowed he had de right to lick his own chile,' he said. That boy Jerry ain't no fool when it comes to gittin' around work or lickin', so he goes to the mast and reports his daddy for fightin'. Mr. McKizick he went down in the cabin, and I hear him and the old man through the skylight, laughing about it. "'Twon't do to be too hard on the old fellow, McKizick, if he r'ally thought he was exercising paternal privileges,' says the Old Man. 'He whaled the boy—there's not a doubt o' that,' says Mr. Make-Physic. 'Well,' says the Old Man, 'put him in confinement without irons, on full rations, for three days—that is if you have any one to cook for the warrant officers in his place. And Mr. Kack-Mizzerick, keep your eye on the boy now.' So they put the old feller in the brig, in spite o' his standin' up at the mast and provin' out o' the Bible that all daddies has the right to whup their boys. Mr. Jack-Flizzick paid no 'tention to that, but told him as how he'd been a-fightin', and them as fout had to take the consekences."

Captain of Forecastle.—"Ap, you've got a mighty mean way o' callin' a good man names behind his back."

Ap Jones.—"Who was a-talkin' about Mr. Do-Small here, a minute ago? Anyhow I know'd one officer that wouldn't a' let anybody off for fightin' as easy as Mr. McKizick done."

"Who, Ap?" asked several at once.

"Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones, sir," responded the quartermaster, happy to bring in the name of his hero.

Smiley.—"So he's in the brig."

Ap Jones.—"Yes; he languishes in choky."

Here came up a little fellow belonging to these men called waisters, who are usually put in that part of the ship because unfit for anything but trifling and menial duties. He showed a disposition to make one of the party,

but was promptly repulsed. The petty officers were fully conscious of the dignities of their rank in the Flying Fish, and would not permit intimacy in any one less than a seaman in rating.

Ap Jones.—"Gentlemen, I interjooce the first Primin' Wire and Sailmaker." This was the only definition the poor fellow could give when asked the name of his station at the gun—Train Tackelman and Sail-trimmer.

All.—"Good evenin', sir! Good evenin', Mr. Primin' Wire and Sailmaker!"

Smiley.—"Have a cheer, sir."

Lewis.—"Our cheers iz not so good as them the gentleman iz used to. Ap, can't you borry one aout o' the cabin?"

Captain of Forecastle.—"Is 'the ship goin' astarn, sir—no, the lead, I mean,' like it was the other day in Santa Cruz when you thought you was a quartermaster?"

Brown.—"Ap, while you're in the cabin, jest fetch the gentleman a bottle of wine."

The man had sense enough to know they were jeering at him, but not enough to make him depart. He hesitated awkwardly.

"Be off with you!" growled the boatswain's mate gruffly. "Lay out on the flying jib-boom and drop yourself overboard!" At that he went away.

No one said a word about him after he had gone. Johnson broke the silence.

"We was talkin' about doo-ils the other day on the quarter-deck, me and Thompson and Still Bill there, least-ways me and Thompson was talkin' and Bill was listenin'. I see lots o' things that-a-way, and they been a-comin' into my head ever sence. There's a sight o' doo-il fightin' goes on in the service, and I've seen my share of it. Why, when we went round the Horn with Thomas ap Catesby R. Jones, in the Ohio liner-battle ship, we had twenty middies in the steerage, and they got to quarrellin' as soon as we discharged the pilot off the Hook. They was in sech a

fix they wouldn't hardly none of 'em speak to one another the whole passage, and that was a matter o' sixty days. When we went in Ry-o, they got pistols and ammynition from the gunner and went ashore on Santy Lucy island, and shot their pistols at one another the best part of an afternoon watch. I was on deck, and I kep' an eye on 'em with the glass. You could see two little puffs o' smoke every now and then, and by and by you could hear the pistols, it bein' a still day. They come off about two bells, purty dirty with the powder and grease, and lookin' tired out and sulky; but that night they made it up, and had a big blow-out, and was good friends afterwards."

Boatswain's Mate.—"Was none of 'em killed?"

Ap Jones.—"No, not even a spar touched."

Boatswain's Mate.—"D—n young fools, to resk their wind for nothin'! When I was a boy we fout a fair fist fight, and somebody allus got hurt."

Johnson.—"They made it up and was good friends, and it turned out lucky for 'em they did. While we lay there they drawed their pay, forty-five dollars a piece in gold—and bein' on their first cruise and never havin' sech a pot o' money in their life before, they hove it away like sweepin's. We was in port three weeks, and the day before we sailed the boardin'-house keepers up town come off and went through 'em, and took their last dollar and wasn't satisfied with that. They said there was more comin' to 'em and they must have it. The middies swore they hadn't a cent left, not even to buy sea-stores with, and promised all fair to send the cash from Valpyryzo or Cally-ow, but nothin' would do 'cept money down. They wasn't goin' to let them middies pay with a flyin' foretaupsle; and so they goes to the first luff, Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones, and he takes 'em in to see the Old Man. The Old Man sent for the caterer o' the midshipmen's mess, and told him as how the money must be paid, and he wasn't goin' to let the service be disgraced. Well, the upshot of it was the middies sold nigh all their cloze and paid the boardin'-

house keepers, and with what was left they bought a sow with pig. That was all the sea-stores they had, and there was on'y five white shirts left amongst 'em, and as five of 'em was on deck at onct, the watch wore the shirts. They used to relieve one another in the steerage so they could shift. They lived on ship's grub till their sow pigged off the Horn. I tell you, they eat them pigs mighty young;—and the old sow didn't outlive her young' uns long."

Smiley.—"I don't see as Mr. Jones showed any great conduct with them middies."

Johnson.—"He done the best any man could. No officer can rightly be held 'sponsible for midshipmen. He was a fine man. He never teched ardent sperrits. He had a cork heel."

Brown.—"Your talkin' about dools and goin' round the Horn 'minds me o' when we come so nigh havin' a dool off the Horn."

Lewis.—"In a horn, I calc'late, Brown!"

Brown.—"Have it your own way."

Captain of Forecastle.—"Never mind him, Brown. Spit it out. We all wants to hear it, Lewis too."

Lewis.—"Sho! don't get so tarnation wrath, Brown. Reel it off!"

Brown.—"There was two middies in the States frigate was awful mad at one another—some fuss about a gal in Ry-o, I believe—and they was goin' to fight with pistols the fust time they got a chance to set foot ashore. They quarrelled afresh right when the ship was in a livin' gale, and nothin' would do these young bloodsuckers but a fight right off. They 'ranged it all. They was to go up that night, for it was clear and the moon was shinin' that bright you could thread your needle by it, and they was to go out on the spritsail yard-arms, one to starboard, one to larboard, and pop away. The young kilmarees! If either had a been teched he'd 'a been gone, for he'd 'a dropped overboard, and it was blowin' so hard we wouldn't a lowered a boat if the flag-officer had fell out o' the cabin win-

ders. Howsomever, the cabin ports was up and barred, so in course he couldn't a gone through them. 'Bout five bells the officer of the deck see two middies come up the ladder and look around sort o' scared, and start for'd. He noticed 'em 'cause they generally piled up permiskus, hardly stoppin' so much as to salute the deck. And purty soon, two more come up in the same fashion, and they started for'd too ; but a pistol dropped out o' one of 'em's breeches-leg. The officer made him fetch it, and he see it was loaded, and he twigged the whole consarn. He sent for the other two, and they had a loaded pistol, and the whole thing come out."

Boatswain's Mate.—"When I was up the Straits in the Potomick, we had a fightin' doctor in the ship. He was a little bit of a red-headed, bench-legged feller, that looked like he was peaceable, but he'd ruther fight nor eat a meal o' shore grub, any day. He was allus a-maintainin' the honor of the sarvice, as he called it. One time he was ashore in a coffee (café) in Naples, eatin' his dinner quiet by hisself, and some Britisher officers of the R'yal Navy come in. We had no great show of a squadron up the Straits in them days ; but the Britishers, they had a slew o' ships, liners at that. When we come in there was fifteen sail o' their liners there, and we looked small amongst 'em. Howsomever, we run in ship-shape and Bristol fashion, not a head above the rail, not a bit o' n'ise to be heard. We made the prettiest flyin' moor you ever see: you ought to see it. Not a word was spoke, but our first luff stood up in the hoss-block and signed what he wanted done, 'stead o' givin' orders. It was fine. We know'd we were little, but 'lowed to show them bloody Britishers we was good. We had jest stopped lickin' 'em fightin', and we meant to lick 'em workin' sails and spars. There was a power o' hard feelin' 'tween the two sarvices then, and lots o' fightin' amongst men and officers, too, when ashore. Well the little Pill was eatin' in the coffee quite peaceable, and them Britishers come in,

and see he was a 'Merican by the cut of his jib, and commenced for to bulkhead him, only there wasn't no bulkhead. They was talkin' about the little Potomick, and laughin' at her size—they couldn't laugh at nothin' else about her; but the Pill he made no answer, till one of 'em said somethin' about her bein' no meaner'n the country she came from. He got up then and challenged the feller, and told him where he'd be to meet him next day with a friend, and walked off. Next day he went to the place and waited a long time, but the lieutenant he had challenged didn't come. Our Old Man and all the officers was axed to a spread aboard their flag-ship that night. I was cap'n's cox's'n, and a little before dark he took all our officers over to the liner in the gig. When we got alongside, the cap'n went up the ladder and forgot to tell me what to do with the boat, so I jest follered up and see it all. All hands was aft, and the marines was turned out in full rig, and all their officers was up, and bosen and side-boys at the gangway to receive our Old Man. Their admiral was on the quarter-deck, too, and says he after all hands was done bowin' and scrapin', 'Before we walks into the cabin, I would thank ye to wait a minute, Captain Percival. I had the people aft to hear a general order.' Our Old Man stopped, in course, and the Britisher read out a paper kow Lieutenant Thingumaree for behavin' hisself unfit for an officer and a gentleman by insultin' a stranger had disgraced the R'yal Sarvice, and how he had disgraced hisself by acceptin' a challenge, and then pusy—pusy—pusy—"

Johnson.—"Pusy—lannymunusly?"

Boatswain's Mate.—"Adzackly. Pusylanusly backin' out. Anyhow he was dismissed His Botanic Majesty's service. Them Britishers was as polite as a Frenchman, after their own 'thorities come down on 'em so severe."

Smiley.—"There's Captain Rodgers, the best officer in the service to-day, shut up, Ap, with your Jones! He ain't no coward, though he's a peaceable-disposed man and

everybody likes him. You'd think he'd 'a got off without any dools to fight, if anybody could ; but he has fit several times. I know he was shot through the neck, and in the leg, and he's got a scar on the right wrist where a ray-peer gashed him."

Lewis.—"I see no advantage in officers shootin' and stabbin' of one 'nother so much."

Johnson.—"It's the custom of the service, and must have its advantage."

Smiley.—"Anyhow, there's too much of it. Don't you think so ?"

Boatswain's Mate.—"A d—d sight too much."

Brown.—"It's nonsense."

Captain of Forecastle.—"In course it is. It s'poses all to be worth the same, whilst one may be a good officer with a head on him and the other a d—d fool. That's so, Bill ?"

Burke.—"Aye. There'll be less of it."

Several.—"How do you know ?"

Burke made no reply.

Boatswain's Mate.—"Still Bill, you're a purty feller, ain't you ? You're no better nor a pirate. You set around and soak up wisdom like a sponge soaks water, and you never let's none out. D—n my eyes, you ought to be squeezed ! Come, spin us a yarn !"

Burke.—"I'm no hand at it."

Brown.—"You better make a hand then, for there's no fairness in your way o' doin'."

Burke.—"I shipped for a quartermaster."

Johnson.—"Brown's right, Bill ; there ain't no fairness in it. What's yours is mine and mine's my own, that's what you go on. S'pose we was all to shet our tater traps like you, wouldn't the ship be a hell afloat ?"

Burke.—"I was born and raised on Block Island." (Sensation among the audience, who now knew Burke's nativity, always before a matter of conjecture.) "My father was born and raised on Block Island. He told me

this yarn, and I know it's so; for he was a straight man. My mother's brother's wife told him her gran'dad told her it happened when he was a little boy. He lived to be ninety-seven. When the country was young, one time a ship-load of folks come over to live. The men mutinied and took the ship. They killed the officers and fetched the passengers on. The men lost their reckoning, and it come on to blow, and the ship got a-fire. She run right on to the beach of Block Island in the gale. The folks on the cliffs could see them. The men were drunk and were killing the passengers. The ship was blazing high up, clean to her poles. The passengers were hollering and jumping overboard. The men were singing. When she struck she broached to. A sea capsized her and put out the fire, quick. They saw no more from the cliffs. Next morning the wreck was broken up, and no life was saved. Every year the ship comes in yet. She comes in at midnight blazing and racing in the gale, and the passengers hollering and jumping overboard, and the men singing and killing them. She strikes and broaches to, and that's the last of her."

The awe-struck men about Burke did not think of questioning the narration. To them it was veritable welcome truth.

Presently there spoke a fore-topman called Morris, who had hitherto been silent.

"That's the best yarn to-night, by odds. It makes me feel queer all over.

"It reminds me of when I was on the west coast in a trading schooner. I got tired of going cruise after cruise in the service; so when I was paid off in Boston in '20, I shipped aboard a schooner that was going out with rum and muskets and looking-glasses and calico, to trade with the darkeys for gold-dust and ivory and pea-nuts and croton nuts. We were to take the croton nuts to England and sell them, and bring the rest of the stuff home. I got the second mate's billet.

"We ran across the pond nicely, and commenced working at Cape Coast Castle. But there was almost nothing to buy there, and that so much dearer than usual that the captain concluded there must have been a good many vessels that way lately. So we on ran down into the Bight of Biafra, to a place called Mungo Park Town. There we found a fleet of small sail like our own, all busy trading. There must have been twenty vessels. There were an immense number of niggers on shore, with dust and ivory, and everything else we wanted, and all anxious to barter. Our anchor was hardly down before two or three captains of other vessels were aboard to tell us about the tariff of prices all had agreed on, and see if we would stand up to it. It was lower than we expected, and of course we signed the agreement.

"The trade was brisk, I tell you. Boats going and coming all the time with men from the schooners and brigs, and canoes paddling backward and forward all the time with niggers: whites ashore, niggers aboard, vessels full of darkeys from morn till dew—till night: dust, and bones, and nuts, and guns, and powder, and lead, and calico, and glasses, and rum, changing hands fast.

"For convenience sake we were all as close in shore as we could lay, and one vessel was right in the mouth of a creek that runs through the nigger town into the harbor. The consequence of our proximity and of our meeting so much ashore, was that in a week we were all acquainted. Then we took to pulling around evenings to visit one another, and got better acquainted still. Some nights all but the ship-keepers would be crowded aboard one vessel, smoking and singing."

Johnson.—"And drinkin'?"

Morris.—"We were afraid to drink much on account of fever. But the fever came anyhow. One morning there were a dozen men down in the fleet, and two died before night. Next day half the crew were in their bunks, and a lot died. Next morning after that, half the vessels were

gone. They commenced getting underway at sundown, and all night they kept running out past us, going to sea to blow the fever out. The rest stuck to it—our captain amongst them. We had got off clear so far, and he was too keen for the owners—he had a share himself—to leave at a time when the trade would be bettered by so many going out of it. So he staid and worked us harder than ever. For the next three days it was awful. Two or three times a day we would see a dead man hove overboard, and the sharks' fins would swarm about the place.

“Our captain had a medical book, and a big box of medicines ; and he showed us two mates how to treat the disease. He went around every morning and dosed every sick man in the harbor, but it didn't seem to hinder their dying. One at a time the other vessels got scared and went out, till on the fifth day, there were only two beside ours.

“That morning at breakfast the captain couldn't eat anything, but he joked a little about the other two vessels, which were preparing to slip, being too weak-handed to get their anchors. After breakfast he said he felt bad, and would lie down a bit. So he did, and never got up again. He was dead before dinner.

“The first mate agreed then to do what I had wanted all along, and we went to work to get underway as quick as we could. But before we got out of the harbor most of the men were feeling bad, and as soon as we were clear of the land the mate got down. Before next morning there was only myself and one other hand that wasn't sick. I was in a tight place—anxious to get out fast, and afraid to carry sail on account of the squalls. That one we had the other day was nothing to some of the squalls on the west coast.”

Johnson.—“That's so. They comes without warnin' and heaves a ship down, before she can shorten sail or keep away.”

Morris.—“The sick men were all more or less crazy,

but they didn't die so fast as those in shore had died. The man that kept up took spells with me at the wheel and resting. The one that was resting had to give the sick men their medicine and watch a young fellow who was raving mad. He was a handsome lad, about twenty, come on his first cruise to try the sea. You couldn't tell what he would do. Once he got up, and came on deck, and walked aft—Jack Hurst, the well man was so dead asleep, I couldn't waken him—and seemed to be trying to talk to me. He was apt to get out of his bunk any time, and we had to watch him very closely. I did all I could for him.

“The first mate was dead and dropped overboard by this time, and so were three of the men. But the third night after we got to sea was the worst time. It was a little after two in the morning, and I had the wheel. Jack Hurst had gone below awhile to look after the sick men, and see that young Perkins was in his bunk, all right. He didn't come back at four bells to relieve me. I forgot to tell you that I had a touch of the fever on me by this time, and was so weak I could hardly stand. I couldn't have kept a-going but for thinking of how much depended on me.

“Well, Jack Hurst didn't come back, and I began to wonder after awhile what was the matter. I called him, thinkin' he might not have heard me strike the bell aft; but he gave no answer. Then I got scared—I was sick and weak, you know—and I imagined Jack was down and I was left all alone. I couldn't stand that. I left the wheel, and the schooner to take care of herself, and went for'd.

“I'll tell you how those trading vessels are built, so you'll understand what happened. They have a cabin aft and a fore-castle for'd, like coasters, and between the hold is bulkheaded off into a sort of a general store-room. There are doors from the fore-castle into the hold, and the same from the cabin, so when the cargo is out you can walk from one end of the vessel to the other through the hold. Our store-room was still nearly full of the stuff we

took out for barter—boxes of muskets and trinkets and bales of dry goods.

“Well, I went for’d and looked down the hatch. I could see nothing, but someway I felt afraid. I called Jack Hurst two or three times, and got no reply, so I mustered up my courage at last and went down the ladder. There was a smoky old lantern burning that just did give out light enough to see by. Jack was stretched out on a chest asleep. Everything was quiet; even the sick men were still in their sleep. I looked into the lad’s bunk, and he was gone.

“I waked Jack Hurst up quick, but he could tell nothing about the boy. He said he had been asleep but a minute, and he knew Perkins was in the bunk just before he dropped off. I knew he hadn’t come on deck, so we commenced looking for him. We hunted everywhere in that forecastle and couldn’t find him—under the lower bunks, into all the bunks, behind the chests, even in the chests, and he was nowhere. Jack and I finished the search, and stopped and stared at one another. If he was as much mystified and scared as I was he felt mighty queer.

“Then I happened to notice that one of the doors into the hold was open a little crack, and I took the lantern and went there, Jack following me. I opened the door and stepped in. The first thing I saw was—UGH! I can’t forget how he looked. There was the lad squatted down, stark naked, jammed in between two bales of goods, holding his hands out in front of him as if he was trying to keep something off. His face was turned up, and he was staring right at me. O, he looked awful! I ran out in the forecastle, and Jack told me afterward I took a step or two up the ladder and fainted away.

“The next I knew I found myself lying on deck aft, and Jack had the wheel. He had pulled me on deck, and had got the body up, too. We buried it in the morning. It was still doubled up and so stiff we had to lash the arms and legs down on the plank.”

Johnson.—"What come o' the schooner, so weak-handed?"

Morris.—"The men got well, and I ran back to Mungo Park Town, and traded out the rest of the goods. Then we went to Liverpool, sold the nuts, shipped three new men, and sailed for Boston."

Smiley.—"You must 'a made a pot o' money."

Morris.—"The owners paid me captain's wages, and offered to let me keep the command of the schooner."

Captain of Forecastle.—"That was mighty mean in 'em."

Morris.—"It was all I was entitled to."

Johnson.—"Why didn't you take the schooner?"

Morris.—"For good reasons."

Boatswain's Mate.—"Johnson, keep down your curiosity. A yarn's a yarn, and you've no right to go back of it."

"Morris, you have got the gift o' gab, and you knows how to work a reckonin', by your own story. If you're no more nor a topman it's your own ch'ice."

Morris got up and left. Johnson began to talk about the Flying Dutchman. As that is commonly the close of a *séance* among seamen, I think we had better follow Morris's example and escape the tedious old tale.

CHAPTER XV.

NEXT morning La Hembrilla was out of sight. Captain Merritt shared the vexation felt by all, but gave up the chase as hopeless and had the ship's head turned back again to the westward. It was his intention to return and cruise off the mouth of the Cobre, watching his opportunities to get information, while prepared to act should the occasion come. After a few days' watching he meant to run along the coast for some distance to the west, to seek

for news, and to return occasionally to the river at night, in hope of catching the schooner off her guard at anchor. It was also his intention to send a boat expedition up the river at an early day, for he thought it possible that the schooner might be caught in that way. However, his expectations were not great: a man of Hackett's repute for acuteness would hardly shut himself up in a place easy of access, as was the *Cobre*. Captain Merritt was convinced that *La Hembrilla* had, not very far away, a snug hiding place; and to find it and attack her therein, before she was frightened away by the hovering man-of-war, was his chief aim.

The wind continued light and was exceedingly variable, so that after a hard day's work, the *Flying Fish* at dark was still several miles to the eastward of the river.

The air was so pleasant and the breeze so light, that the ward-room officers availed themselves of the captain's permission to smoke in the starboard gangway; and, bringing up chairs from below, seated themselves comfortably inside of the rail, forward of the mainmast.

The night was very dark, and a light veil of clouds overspread the sky, concealing the stars. It might nearly as well for sailing purposes have been calm; but now and then faint breathings of the air were felt, which, though too weak to do more than gently ruffle the water for a few moments, still sufficed to keep steerage way on the ship. The water was so still that its only sound was a faint lapping under the bows and counter, as the sloop sunk and rose on the ground-swell. Around the horizon was a broad band of blackness, which faded away above into the lighter darkness of the sky, and, below, extended out upon the sea, surrounding them with its gloom. To a man entirely alone, the silence and darkness would have been oppressive, if not appalling; but the comfortable party of officers felt the advantage attendant on human companionship, and, beyond a casual remark upon sitting down, paid no further attention to their situation. There was only

one thing which could be clearly seen, and that was what caused remark. The water was in a peculiarly brilliant phosphorescent condition, and was swarming with fish. The fish were all darting about as if in play, their swift and devious courses marked by lines of fire. The effect was wonderfully beautiful. The patterns of the intersecting lines charged like those of a kaleidoscope, and though without their geometric order and variety of hue, were more interesting. Old lines of glowing light would pale and fade away, only to be succeeded by new ones with fresher brilliancy. Occasionally, a sudden rush of the fish would convert the water into a volume of soft golden radiance in which swam the ship. It was a striking display of submarine fireworks.

The officers naturally fell to talking about La Hembrilla, conjecturing her hiding-place, admiring her beauty, and chafing at the speed which made her safe. Hartley and Garnet had told already about the near view they had had of the schooner from the Virginia, but they were now asked so many questions that the slightest details of their knowledge were brought out.

Mr. Briggs suggested as a means of capture that Dr. Bobus should fill some very thin hollow shot—he had heard of their use—with chemicals that would evolve deadly gases on contact with the air, and that a few be fired into La Hembrilla, when next they succeeded in getting her in range. Dr. Bobus thought there would be a practical difficulty in making the metal of such projectiles of just the proper thickness, but believed that the hollow shot would be a formidable weapon if filled with gunpowder and if a lighted port-fire could be stuck firmly into the hole just before firing. In such a case the shot might be lodged in the hull of the schooner, where it would remain till the port-fire caused an explosion that would blow her up.

So they talked on, till Hartley remarked that he was reminded by the yellow lights in the water of a queer

dream he had the night before. He was asked to tell it, and began without hesitation.

"I can't imagine what put it in my head, and I can't remember how it began. You'll have to be satisfied with a part of a dream, and that is as near nothing as anything can get without reaching it.

"I thought I was in a yellow ship in the Yellow Sea, and the crew were yellow Portuguese and Chinamen and mulattoes. I don't recollect being called, but I was dressing myself at night in a state-room painted yellow. I got through in the quick easy way in which we work in dreams, and went up a yellow pine ladder to a yellow-painted quarter-deck. I thought it was blowing a gale, and was lightening so continuously that the whole sky appeared yellow. The waves were combing, and there was so much phosphorus in them—just like the water to-night—that they made long rolls of yellow light. I found the officer of the deck standing by the yellow fife-rail, with a yellow oil-skin on, and a yellow brass trumpet in his hand. He handed me a yellow order-book, and I was about to take the trumpet, when, presto! he changed instantly to a great golden snake covered with glittering scales, and hanging fifty feet down from the main-yard, around which he had caught a turn with his tail. His head was sticking out toward me, about at right angles to his body, and his big eyes were like blazing topazes. He seemed hungry. His mouth was wide open and his teeth looked horrible—a long curved row of sharp fangs as yellow as gold. I threw the morning order-book down his throat and woke up."

"Didn't you *yell, oh?*" asked Briggs.

The paymaster spoke up: "Any one who shall pun, or attempt to pun, or who shall entice or attempt to entice others to pun or attempt to pun, or who—"

"I won't do it again."

"Better not, Mr. Briggs," said the doctor. "The pun is the lowest form of wit, and the easiest."

"Mr. Hartley, perhaps your liver is a little torpid," he

continued. "A good dose of blue mass will save you from such afflictions for some time to come."

"No, I am perfectly well."

"Relish your meals, eh? Don't feel a bad taste in your mouth in the morning, eh?"

"No," said Hartley decidedly.

"Preliminary attack of the green-eyed monster, Mr. Hartley. A contusion is always yellow at first, you know."

Robbins broke out coarsely, "Haw! haw! That's it, Doc. You hit the nail on the head."

"Maybe it's a vision of gold dollars, Hartley," said the paymaster.

Briggs.—"Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold :
The night-mare Life-in-Death was she '—

I forget the rest."

Garnet, who saw that Hartley was annoyed at what he thought light references to his sacred love, spoke up: "You wouldn't feel so much like joking, gentlemen, if you had to stand a breach of promise suit."

"What! How? Why? Tell us about it," exclaimed the party.

"Hartley can explain if he will, but I shouldn't feel like it if I were in his place." This had the effect of silencing the jocose crowd. Briggs took Garnet's remark without a single grain of salt, and for a good while after Hartley received unnecessary pity from the sympathetic young man. Robbins and the paymaster were partly mystified and partly suspicious of a hoax; altogether, each thought it safest for himself to drop the subject. Bobus and McKizick, with more experience and insight, readily guessed that the subject was a delicate one.

Hartley's goings ashore in New York, and the various signs of the disease of love which he had displayed since, had attracted the attention of his messmates. In Santa Cruz the officers had called on the Dewhurst family, and had noticed still more. They had seen that Hartley was usually

there when they arrived, and that he stayed after they went away; and he could not entirely conceal in their presence his preference for Mary. But they did not know of the engagement yet, and felt free to joke him at will. A spoony officer is always a fair butt, though an engaged one receives more consideration, partly because the lady is involved, partly because publicity is commonly supposed to end romance.

Dularge had been quite taken with Mary's appearance, and occasionally condescended to express his approval of her in a manner that made Hartley long to thresh him; but he wisely allowed himself to be governed by the prudence of Garnet, who insisted that he had no right to take notice of the young fellow's conceited puffing.

Dr. Bobus was a good talker, and to-night he was in the vein. The rallying of Hartley reminded him of one of his own early experiences, which he now proceeded to relate.

"My friends, you are all bachelors except Mr. McKizick: he and I are the only married men in the mess. But I was once a bachelor myself, and I remember enough of that heathen condition, to know how you feel. You consider an engagement to marry as a sort of self-immolation, or rather like signing very disagreeable articles for life. Just think of being engaged to two young women at one time."

"Why, Doctor! Surely that was another man! Give us the story, Doctor!" exclaimed the party.

"Well, gentlemen, you shall hear the story. I was the guilty man.

"It was a good many years ago, when I was still young, and I was assistant surgeon of the Washington, on this same station. You know that the Spanish settled Pensacola. There have always been a few of their good families there, and generally some American residents looking out for the main chance. Whenever one of our vessels put in, the officers were sure of a pretty gay time. We ran in with the Washington in the spring of 1801, and stayed a month. There was a member of a Philadelphia firm there at the time, with his family, come down for health, and to

attend to business interests. I shall call him Mr. Brown—and by the way, Mr. Hartley, I don't want you to rehash this story for the Lyceum—I've read your scribblings, sir—for the people concerned are alive, or were at the last I heard of them, and they might think hard of me.

“This Mr. Brown had a beautiful daughter named Emily, whom I met on shore. To come to the point at once, I fell in love with her—very much in love—and as I knew my time was short, and that I should not be likely to have another opportunity, I resolved to advance my suit as rapidly as possible. I had heard of the young lady before in Philadelphia, how lovely she was, and how much attention she received, and how coolly and easily she repulsed all assaults upon her heart. Perhaps you may think it was rather presumptuous in me to aim so high—such a beautiful girl, and with such a repute for coldness—but I had no great hope of success, and then, you know, every young male American may *try* as high as he pleases. Besides, gentlemen, I was not counted an ill-looking man at thirty, though I am now rather the worse for wear.

“There was an old *hidalgo* in Pensacola at that time, Don Ambrosio de Yriarte y Llaca; and he had a pretty daughter, too. By a singular coincidence, her name was in Spanish what Miss Brown's was in English—Emilia. I met her when I met Emily. I hope you all know me too well to ascribe anything like bragging to me, but it is a fact, that while I fell in love with Emily, Emilia fell in love with me. There was no mistaking it; all the officers of the ship saw it and joked me on my good luck, as they called it. Honestly, it was a great annoyance, and worse, to me. Everywhere we met, I would find her dark eyes fixed sorrowfully on me, and she seemed never so happy as when talking to me in her pretty broken English. I received several invitations to his house from Don Ambrosio, who was about the only person in Pensacola ignorant of the truth. He was a very fine old man, with the most lofty courtesies you could imagine, and so dignified that I suppose

nobody dared to tell him. I knew he would never accept a plebeian son-in-law, and besides I had no inclination to take a place in his family; so I excused myself, and kept away from his house whenever I could. Still, I had to go sometimes; and I met Emilia at other places.

"I was fortunate in one respect. Emily had been accustomed to admirers, and here she had none—not one of our officers was smitten besides myself—so she naturally listened better to me than she might have. I couldn't see that I made any progress, and I was almost discouraged; but I was getting along very well, as events showed. Things went on so, I paying every possible attention to her and she as cool and careless to all appearance as ever, till the day before we were to sail for the Havana. That night the residents gave us a little farewell ball, and I went ashore determined to finish the business, one way or another.

"I did not enjoy the dancing very well, for I was nervous, and all the time getting more so. Between the dances, I drank more wine than my custom allowed, but I did not feel the effect of it in the least. I am now inclined to believe that the usual stimulus was merely retarded by my mental depression. I tried to get a chance to speak apart with Emily, but she was in demand and something always prevented; so that it was after midnight when the opportunity came. She was engaged to me for one dance and Emilia for the next. Instead of leading her on the floor I begged a word with her in private. She graciously consented, and I took her into an adjoining room, a kind of library, temporarily vacant, and proposed. She referred me to papa; by which I understood, of course, that if he offered no objection she accepted me. I knew Mr. Brown well enough to be sure he would let Emily choose for herself, and I felt very much pleased. About that time, the extra quantity of wine which I had drunk began to work on me, I think. We sat there talking till the dance was nearly done, when Emily asked me to go look for my next

partner. She said she would sit still and might not be missed, she did not feel like dancing just then. I remember the smile with which she uttered the words; gentlemen; it was—well, well.

“I obeyed her instructions, of course, but while waiting for the dance to come to an end, in the exuberance of my feelings I drank three glasses of sherry. I looked about for Emilia and could not find her, so I thought I was free, and would go back to Emily. Who should be in the library but Emilia, herself, all alone? She spoke to me in her pretty way: ‘I no dance dis time, I tired. You talk to what you call Mees Emilia, Doctor Bobus.’ And I did talk to her with a vengeance. I am sorry I begun this story, gentlemen; I am vexed to remember my weakness.”

“Go on, doctor! Too late to stop now! Unfair to disappoint us now!”

“Please to lay what follows more to the salmon than to me.

“Emilia looked so sad and talked so sorrowfully about my going away, that I began to pity her. As the liquor got into my head I wondered why she would not do for a wife as well as Emily; and finally, I forgot Emily entirely, and told Emilia I loved her, and made a fool of myself generally. She—I don’t believe there was ever such a happy woman in the world before. She was as kind as an American girl would be after a five years’ engagement. It did not take long for me to cool down under that. I sobered fast; and, realizing what I had done, began to feel very much disgusted at myself and her, too. I had no right to feel so, for I was entirely to blame; and she, I fancy, was only behaving as Spanish girls usually do in such cases. But I could not help it. I tried to get away several times, but it was always ‘Ay, Eduardo’—she had my name pat in Spanish already—‘no leave your poor Emilia yet. Emilia no see Eduardo no more, four, five year, till we marry,’ and then she’d color up and look happy. Poor girl! I hadn’t sense enough to tell her it was the

sherry Edward Bobus had drunk, and not himself, had proposed to her. At last I did manage to get away, and I went straight aboard and turned in, a most miserable man.

"When I awoke in the morning the ship was getting under way. I recollected the dilemma I was in, and was as wretched as ever. While we were standing down the bay, I wrote a note full of affection to send back to Emily by the negro who piloted us out. Actually, gentlemen, when I thought of Emilia's disappointment, I hadn't the heart to bring it on so soon, and instead of writing her a letter of explanation and apology, I copied the note to Emily, put them in separate envelopes, and directed them."

"I know. You directed them crossways," put in Briggs, eagerly.

"Not so, Mr. Briggs. A want of clerical accuracy was never among my failings.

"We ran across to the Havana, and there found a brig about to go to Pensacola. I wrote to both the girls again from there, and sent each a box of fine French candies. My guilty indiscretion about the notes had only committed me more deeply. I had concluded I would have to keep it up, and trust to luck to get out of the scrape. The brig came back before we sailed, but brought me no letter from either girl. I thought that was strange, and it was stranger still when two or three more vessels came in during the next month, and still failed to bring me any word.

"At the end of two months the Washington was ordered back to Pensacola for some purpose, and I prepared for the worst. I got ashore as soon as I could after the anchor was down, and went down to Mr. Brown's. He and his family had gone home. Then I went to Don Ambrosio's, and had an interview with Emilia. She came in the room looking pale and thin, and the first word she said was, 'Ay, Eduardo, you no love poor Emilia. Why you write same carta à Emily y Emilia?' That showed me at once how it was: I had entirely forgotten all along that the two girls were close friends. I drew from Emilia how it all

came out. It appeared that neither could keep her secret, and each confessed to a lover aboard the Washington, and notes and candy. The similarity made them curious, and my name came out. Just imagine my feelings to hear it ! and from her.

“And Emilia said if I would love her, she would be a good wife, and go with me anywhere, that Emily was angry so I could not marry her. I felt like a mean scoundrelly thief, who had picked up lost property he did not need, and had failed to return it to the owner when he had a chance. It was the worse I ever felt in my life. One good has come of it, anyhow ; I have never since allowed myself to be the least overtaken with wine.

“Well !—I explained it all to Emilia the best I could, and told her I was unworthy and unfit to be her husband, and that she would die in our cold Northern climate, and that her father would never consent. I had to tell her how I came to propose, and that I didn't love her. Poor girl ! It seemed almost to strike her down. I did what I wouldn't have done for one of our conventional American girls—I thought it the best—the Spanish are more theatrical in every-day life than we—I kneeled down and begged her forgiveness for the wrong I had done her. She bade me good-by ; ‘á Díos, Eduardo ; Díos guarde’—the poor thing could not say more—she broke down—and I had to run away.”

They were all silent when Bobus ceased, but in a minute Robbins's coarse voice arose “I bet the present Mrs. Bobus never got the straight of that yarn.”

“Lieutenant Robbins, I have already regretted telling the story, and you make me repent it still more. The person affronts me who interferes in my family affairs, where he has no concern.”

Robbins walked off in a huff.

The doctor went on: “I will finish the story, gentlemen. I married Miss Emily Brown three years later, when our cruise was up.”

The party showed their interest and pleasure by various remarks, Hartley politely thanking him. Then they fell silent, and no one seeming to have anything to say, they all got up to go below, each picking up his chair to carry it down. The procession of chair-bearers had started, each moving slowly and carefully in the darkness; when their attention was suddenly arrested by something of a more stirring nature than stories of the past.

A pale green light trembled in the air, illuminating the sails in a strange and ghastly manner, and making the lofty spars and delicate lines of the mazy cordage stand out distinctly clear against the sky above. At the same time a soft fizzing sound was heard. After the first start of surprise, each officer knew instantly what it was: some vessel very near them was burning one of the colored fireworks used at sea for making signals in the night. They instinctively put down their chairs and turned to the point from which the light came. A single glance showed a schooner exactly to windward not a hundred yards away. She was standing to the westward in a course parallel to that of the Flying Fish; but the great amount of canvas she had spread urged her forward at a double rate of speed. To the sloop's people, their own vessel was stationary, while the schooner was slowly creeping past.

The schooner was not a stranger: the whole watch at once recognized *La Hembrilla*. So near was she that the voices of men talking on board were perfectly audible, every word being clearly understood. A party of five or six persons stood aft by her taffrail: one, a gigantic man, holding out the signal which burned with a hissing noise and a vivid flame, while they all talked together. The light shone with a bright green radiance, on the tall spars and immense sails of the schooner, and revealed, standing in the gangway and gazing to the northeast like their superiors aft, a silent group of men, perhaps fifteen or twenty in number.

"I bet them mulatty 'ounds 'as hall gone to sleep,"

came across the water in a gruff, grumbling, deep bass voice, with a cockney accent.

"Wa-al, no," answered a keen, thin, decisive twang from the group by the taffrail; "they ain't had time yet, I guess."

"Time enough," retorted the first. "The lights should halways be ready to hanswer hany time."

"They haven't ever failed us yet," replied the second voice. "You're too hard on the blacks, Jeames. There's good men amongst our blacks."

"That's said for the 'earin o' the niggers in the gang-way," replied the other, with a coarse laugh.

"Jeames Arrowson," said the second voice, sharply; "none of that. Recollect your place." Then the speaker went on more mildly, "I said no more than is jest, Jeames. I'm consarned to have to show our light, for that darned cruiser may be around here for all I know."

"Pshaw!" replied Arrowson, laughing again; "'e couldn't 'it the broadside of a barn."

"His shot come plenty close enough last Sunday, off the p'int o' Pescadór, anyhow. He spiled the looks o' the new mainsail, a mile off. And every time he gets a chance to shoot at the little gal he'll shoot better."

There was more of the talk, but no one had time to listen longer. At the first gleam of the light everybody on the sloop's deck was amazed, and it was a wonder that no exclamation arose to betray her presence to the pirates. Discipline, and the quick, eager warnings of the petty officers, kept the men still.

McKizick without any hesitation walked up to Dularge and relieved him. The word was quietly passed for the watch to take off their shoes, go below, clear away the star-board battery, and commence firing. The guns were formerly always kept loaded at sea, and McKizick hoped the ship would remain undiscovered long enough to enable him to deliver the broadside they contained. He knew the signal would, if not extinguished, burn enough longer to make the

schooner a good target, and he hoped to get in a disabling shot. Captain Merritt was called, and he appeared on deck in a twinkling, barefoot, and still clad in his night-gown, which was stuffed into his trousers at the waist. By day he would have presented an uncommonly stout appearance. The men were all awake now, working hard to get the hammocks out of the way and the guns cast adrift. The captain sent messenger after messenger to the division officers for them to make haste. "Fire as soon as you can," "Open without delay," was the word. "Every second's precious," he said to the first lieutenant; "it's a wonder he hasn't seen us already."

Below everything was in extreme silent confusion. The battle lanterns had not been lighted, and the guns' crews were striving bewildered in the complete darkness, to do everything at once, quickly and without noise.

La Hembrilla kept on reaching ahead till the sloop was well on her port-quarter, and then, either the changed position of the vessel, or a chance look, or some accidental noise overheard from the sloop, betrayed the danger to the pirates. The flaring signal was cast overboard, its light instantly extinguished, and a thick veil of darkness fell between the two vessels. La Hembrilla was gone, vanished, flown like a thought, swallowed up in blackness. A hundred imprecations arose from the disappointed seamen, who missed the light and guessed the cause of its disappearance.

McKizick threw off all disguises. "Light the battle lanterns!" he roared. "Look alive, men! On deck the sail-trimmers, and get the t'gal'n't stunsels ready for setting!" A number of the navy night signals were brought up, and several of them were lighted at once. A man was sent on each topsail and top-gallant yard-arm to hold out one of these bright illuminators. They brought La Hembrilla in sight again, but barely revealed her, for she was now a quarter of a mile away. Firing was almost guess-work, for the schooner was so indistinct the gun captains could scarcely keep their eyes upon her; and to get an

aim even approximating to correctness was very difficult. However, they did their best. The guns flashed redly into the night and boomed with no uncertain sound, though the aim was none of the most sure. A dozen shots were discharged before the captain gave orders to cease firing, convinced of its inutility. Very soon afterward the pirate ran out of sight.

Burke went over to where the captain and first lieutenant were in deep consultation. "Yon is two lights ashore, just lit, sir," he reported to McKizick. Both turned to the quartermaster and asked him to point them out. He extended his arm broad off the weather quarter, where shone the two lights, not with the color and vividness of the first seen, but with a steady yellow gleam, as a candle would shine from a window across a dark prairie. One light was higher than the other and nearly over it.

"They must be having a fandango ashore. They're up later than usual," said the first lieutenant.

"It's no dancing, sir," replied the quartermaster. "Them lamps has something to do with the schooner."

"Very good, Burke," said McKizick good-humoredly; "keep an eye on 'em, and report when they go out."

The breeze had freshened in the meantime, and the sloop was now moving at the rate of two miles an hour. While all the events had been passing since the discovery of the schooner not more than fifteen minutes had elapsed. That vessel now added to their wonder, and to the number of her mysterious actions. She burned a firework like the first, except that it was red instead of green, and was the time displayed in such a cunning manner, that she herself remained unseen. The men were sent to the guns again and allowed to fire at the light; but their uncertainty as to its distance, joined to the fact that it was a good deal like shooting at a star, made their aim as dubious as before. At any rate the pirates kept the light burning for full five minutes.

McKizick thought Burke's idea about the two lamps

was very probably a correct one; but the captain, who had a theory assigning the concealment of La Hembrilla to a large lagoon near a village to the eastward, disagreed with him. He ordered the course to be kept, west one-half south, intending to come to off the Cobre. A visionary hope of finding the schooner some morning lying quietly near, defenceless, at anchor, and unable to escape, still possessed him. The most practical must sometimes hope for the unlikely.

So they ran on slowly, all hands remaining on deck because they would be soon needed to anchor the ship. With such a warm fragrant air and such soft planks as the Fish had in her spar-deck sometimes, there were few of the men but preferred the sky to a blanket. The officers asked permission, and resumed their pipes while waiting.

After awhile—an hour or so—Burke reported that the lights ashore had been doused.

“Are you sure we didn’t run them down?” asked McKizick.

“Yes, sir; one was high up, and they both went out together.” This confirmed McKizick’s opinion, and he spoke of it to Captain Merritt; but that officer thought their distance was now too great to leave even Burke’s eyesight infallible, and adhered to his own opinion. Of course the ship ran in the current of his mind, or sailed before the gale of his will, or, in direct language, went where he wished. She kept on after the pirate—at least the captain thought so, and meant so; but more correctly, she continued to thrust her long head-booms into the bank of blackness to the west. Very slowly by this time. The catspaw had died away, and the puffs came fainter and fainter. Still, she forged ahead, minding her helm.

The phosphorescence of the water grew dimmer. The flashes still appeared to show the lightning-like passage of the swift fishes; but they were paler, their radiance was thinner and more evanescent. At last they ceased, and the unrelieved darkness grew painful. They were off the

mouth of the river, whose fresh waters were incompatible with the presence of the luminous animalcula.

The breeze left them at last, and a dead calm prevailed. The sails flapped backward, flapped forward, to the regular rocking of the ship, with a hollow, monotonous, tiresome noise. They could hear the surf breaking on the beach, a slight washing sound, unlike the usual sustained and mellow music, yet very distinct. It seemed the nearer for its lowness, its warning whisper giving the idea of treacherous reefs close at hand. Mr. McKizick walked over to the starboard gangway, where a man was gazing intently and silently into the gloom. Few could have recognized even an old acquaintance with certainty on such a night, trusting to the eyes alone, and in this case there was nothing to guess at but the back of a black lump ; but the first lieutenant was seldom at fault. "How's the wind, Mr. Thick ?" asked he.

"Up and down, like a dog's fore-leg, sir," replied that worthy.

"Going to have it any better ?"

"Not before morning, sir ; not enough to lift a skyscraper."

McKizick went away, and Thick renewed his seer-like inspection of night and darkness. "By the hokum !" said he.

The captain reluctantly gave up his hope of any immediate change in the weather, and determined that, as the current of the Cobre was sweeping the ship out to sea, he would at once carry out his intention of anchoring. This was done with no ceremony or delay, the anchor being dropped off the bows without stopping to shorten sail.

Then the light sails and the courses were handed, but the topsails were merely clewed up and their yards left at the mast-heads. The captain was thinking again of the idea, to which he clung, of finding La Hembrilla within gunshot some morning ; and he meant to be ready to give her a quick chase.

When the furling was done, the men lay down quietly from aloft. Some dropped on deck and went to sleep; some gathered in little knots and talked together in a still and drowsy manner. Then the pipe sounded their dismissal and the lookouts were posted. In five minutes the deck was deserted. It was after midnight.

Silence and darkness were Garnet's outer companions of the watch. Within his faithful bosom, Isabel Terrell divided the space with Uncle Sam.

CHAPTER XVI.

HARTLEY had the morning watch. The light of dawn had already appeared in the east when he relieved Garnet. "Well, Will," he inquired sleepily, "anything in sight?"

"No. Here's the order book. You're to get the ship under way if there's any wind. Now let me get to my bunk. I'm nearly dead for a nap."

"No sleeper than I am," growled Hartley after his friend's retreating figure.

He *was* sleepy, for his four scant hours had seemed scarcely more than a minute's nap, and had hardly rested him. He was in a very bad humor with the service as long as he felt fagged; but after awhile the bullet-headed, dark-woolled youth of African descent who was his body-servant, appeared coming from the galley, to his eyes a charming Ganymede, and bearing a cup of 'Navy mud,' *alias* coffee, according to the custom of the service in morning watches. The decoction was not good to the taste, but it was reviving to the body and cheering to the mind. Under its influence Hartley was able to enjoy the sunrise.

At first the sky was covered with massings of dark blue cloud, gatherings of the night's pall, except in the east,

where there appeared low down a single little spot of silver vapor. As the sun rose up toward the edge of the water the sea on that side took the splendid color of fresh bronze, the dull clouds were tinged with a sombre rudeness, and the spot of silver changed and grew brighter and brighter, till it glowed like a drop of molten gold. For awhile it was the brilliant centre of light. The sun approached nearer the horizon and the ruddy tinges changed to tints of salmon and saffron and amber. The little spot lost its individuality in a mass of its own color which drifted over it. Long shafts and pencils of amber and gold light glanced across the sky, contrasting beautifully with the dull blue of the shaded parts of cloud. The sea changed gradually to silvery reflections on its usual blue; and last of all the sun lifted his eye over the rim of the horizon to take a preparatory peep at the world, and commonplace day was fairly ushered in. It put him in a good humor with the world, the flesh, and the service.

The ship lay directly off the mouth of the Cobre river, perhaps two miles from the shore. With the glass Hartley could see clearly up the stream, to where it curved away to the west, hiding itself in winding among the bold hills between which it ran. Nothing was in the river, and not a sign of life could be detected on the shores. To all outward appearance they might have been the discoverers of the beautiful coast before them. Hartley felt the longing impulse which prompts us to examine and explore the new and strange, to enjoy the bridal pleasure of unveiling nature's virgin face. But it could be no more than longing with him, for while he gazed through the spy-glass, he saw the palms begin to wave their long arms, and directly the water in shore was darkened with a steady breeze off the land. He had the messenger passed, and, by the time the wind got out to the Flying Fish all was ready for heaving up the anchor. The men walked cheerfully round the capstan, and the anchor came up easily, leaving its hard bed without the usual clinging delay. The sails

were trimmed, and under a cloud of canvas the ship again pursued her way toward the west. Then Hartley set the men to work at the daily scrubbing and cleaning the immaculate man-of-war received. When Captain Merritt came up from his cabin everything was in ship-shape again.

All day long they fanned onward, making but slow progress. As the sun rose higher it killed the morning strength of the breeze. At six bells in the evening the captain told the first lieutenant to let the hands skylark. "I want to keep them contented, and they have had enough lately to worry them a good deal," he said.

"Aye, aye, sir," was the response, and so on the pipe was heard attracting universal attention. The boatswain's mates bawled: "Do you here there, fore and aft—*skylark!*"

It seems rather a whimsical thing to order two hundred and fifty grown men to set to playing like boys; but the crew of the Flying Fish did not regard it in that manner. To them it was merely a permission, and the recreation was very proper in their eyes. A genuine sailor-man is always a boy in many respects. He can't keep his clothes, he is highly irreverent, he needs looking after and correcting, and he loves to play.

The men were instantly full of fun and laughter. The customary restraints removed, they felt as delighted as scholars let out of school; and they went into all kinds of available mischief with zest. Games were started everywhere. Leap-frog was a favorite one, and they showed their agility by springing neatly over the bowed mess-mate with seldom a trip or a fall, in spite of the motion of the ship. In the game as they played it only one man went down, others vaulting over him in a steady stream, and each was bound to give him a spur with the heel as he passed his back. An old seaman stood by as umpire. If any one failed in the kick, or touched the frog except with hands and heel, *he* had to be frog. If a man fell through accident, before he could rise, or the stream of

leapers be checked, several more would tumble over him in a heap ; which was immense fun.

Another game they played was Bear. A sailor went down on his hands and knees in the middle of the fore-castle, and a thick folded tarpaulin was laid on his back. He was the Bear. The keeper stood by his side, holding in his right hand a rope's end with which to defend him, and confined to a circle of about ten feet in diameter by another rope, the end of which he held in his left hand. The other players watched every chance to strike the bear with their ropes, and the keeper tried to fight them off. He could strike any one he could reach without letting go his tether, but if in his excitement he did let it go, all hands were at liberty to thresh him until he had caught it up again. Any one he succeeded in striking had to be bear, and bear became keeper. This game was greatly enjoyed, and "One, two, three, my bear is free" was often heard as the keeper announced all ready to begin.

Practical jokers roamed through the ship, seeking whom they might devour. One band made it their especial business to catch and bump every marine who showed his head on the spar-deck. The bumping was done by four men, each of whom seized one of the marine's limbs. He was then swung backward and forward, and his seat of honor brought into concussion with the cable bitts, like a battering ram, with a very moderate amount of gentleness.

But all other fun grew insignificant when the old boat-swain's mate was seen advancing up the gangway, holding the struggling monkey in both hands and calling gleefully, "All hands ketch monkey!" The men swarmed on the fore-castle, roaring, "Let him loose!" "Put him on the main stay!" "Carry him on the foreyard!" "Let him go!" "Set him on the galley funnel!" "Give him a start!" and a hundred other directions. The old man calmly put Jocko in the fore rigging. He grinned defiance to all for one instant, and then mounted aloft with all the nimbleness of his native woods.

This was the monkey which the boatswain and the midshipmen had bought with the remnant of their money after Thick's horse trade in Santa Cruz. As he was a joint-stock monkey it was nobody's business to care for him, and he did not receive much attention after the first novelty had worn off and he had bitten most of the stock-holders in their vain efforts to caress him. He was falling into neglect, and getting very thin and lean in his cage, when a deputation of seamen, unable to permit a pet to suffer, waited on the company represented by Larkin, the caterer of the midshipmen's mess, with a view to purchasing. Larkin would not sell the beast, but cheerfully let the men have him to care for and feed. After that he fared well and thrived. All the seamen in the ship took charge of his diet, regulating it by giving him the best they had as long as he would take it. At first he would eat voraciously till his stomach was crammed, then his "penam bags," as the men called his mouth-pouches, would be filled almost to bursting, and then he would look sad because it was impossible to stow away any more. He speedily got fat, and became very particular in his tastes. His education was intrusted to a mizzen-topman named Burson, who had made a study of the monkey, and by common consent knew more about teaching them than any one else in the ship. "Jimmy Burson for it," the men would say in rapturous admiration, after seeing some new trick performed. "He's been shipmates with 'em. He knows how they feel. He can get in with 'em if anybody can." And Burson really was very successful. So much so that the animal was soon allowed to range freely about the ship, and the middies got to speaking of him proudly as 'our monkey.' 'Our monkey' was a mischievous and villainous little beast. When he got the run of the ship he soon explored everything, and by the time he began to feel at home he commenced his tricks. He would snatch a man's cap off his head and run out on a yard-arm with it, where he was over the water. There he would sit

secure and begin to pull the cap to pieces with tooth and nail. It was useless to go out after it, because he would instantly drop it overboard and run away. The men soon found that the only way to get their property back was to ask Burson, who had taught Jocko to bring him anything, to call in the monkey.

Jocko got in the paint pots on one occasion, and ornamented himself in a striking manner. Solomon in all his glory, or a wild Indian on the war-path, was not to be compared to him then. He contracted the bad habit of chewing tobacco, and nearly killed himself by eating the cigar stumps he fished out of the kids, where they had been thrown by the officers. It became unsafe to leave a book or paper of any kind in the chairs at the smoking place, for he loved to make a litter with paper. This propensity was displayed in the destruction of the boat signal card. The first lieutenant had had the ship's painter make, on a large sheet of cardboard, a complete copy of all the flags to be used in recalling the different boats to the ship, and this sheet was tacked up on the gun-deck against the bulkhead of the cabin pantry. Jock was quickly attracted by the bright colors, and tried to get it down. It was about a foot higher than he could jump, however; and after several good efforts he retired. But he had not given it up. He would recollect it several times every day, and come back to try again; and all the while his jumping powers improved with the practice. The men saw it, but they would not for the world have interfered. It was only a good joke to them; their sympathies were all with the monkey. After a week's perseverance his faithfulness and frequent efforts were crowned with success. He came up the captain's ladder one afternoon, holding the card in his hand, and grinning with delight. He seemed perfectly aware that he had done wrong, for he darted to the cross-jack stay instantly, and, in spite of the encumbrance of the card, which was too much sail for him, ran nimbly up on three legs. Then he got on the weather crossjack yard-

arm, and proceeded with the air of an experimenter to tear the card into very small pieces.

His greatest feat of all had been on the day before the men had their skylark. The captain had brought a large bunch of green bananas in Santa Cruz, and hung them in his state-room, intending to eat them as they ripened. Singularly, none appeared to ripen. On inspection the bunch proved to be much smaller than at first, and there were marks on the main stem that showed where fruit had been detached. The captain was mystified, and said nothing about it. There was a small air-port in the room, which he kept open for ventilation, and through this Sir Monk had made his entrances and exits. On the day of discovery, the captain, who was sitting reading in the outer cabin, thought he heard a noise in the state-room. He went there, opened the door, and looked in upon a scene of destruction. There sat the monkey on the bed, eating a half-ripe banana and looking happy. Captain Merrit stepped in quickly, and shut the air-port before Jocko could get to it. Then he cleared up the room. The monkey had opened a drawer in the desk, taken out and torn up a considerable amount of stationery, broken the sealing wax into bits as small as possible, and unrolled the captain's commission. This was on parchment and too strong to tear, so it had evidently been a subject of study. The result of Jock's cogitation was that he made up in the shaving mug a paste of tooth-powder, mucilage, and ink, with which he had plastered the commission. The captain threshed him with a ruler, and let him out yelling.

When the boatswain's mate let the monkey loose all the foretop-men and a number of the other seamen started aloft after him, while a good many went up the main rigging to head him off in case he crossed the stays. Then ensued a lively time. The men were active and determined to catch the monkey, Jocko a great deal more nimble, and fully as anxious not to be caught. He was full of resources. When he seemed hopelessly penned and everybody looked

to see him grabbed, he would suddenly find some smart unexpected way out of the scrape. The men followed him fearlessly into the dizziest places aloft, but catch him they could not. Those on deck roared with delight and appreciation at each new escape, and those aloft chased him all the harder. At last McKizick saw that the chasers were becoming annoyed at failure and reckless in their efforts, so he stopped the pursuit by having the hammocks piped down.



CHAPTER XVII.

THEY wafted onward that night at a snail's speed—a water-snail's—with the provokingly light airs. Garnet had the deck in the early morning, and no sooner did he send the lookouts aloft after day was fairly established, than a sail was reported. She lay ahead, and so far away that neither her course nor her rig could be determined. Later, the wind died away as on the preceding morning, faint flurries of attempted breeze, which ruffled the water for a few minutes and passed away to leeward, remaining their whole dependence for progress. At eight, a better sustained and stronger cat's-paw than common set them ahead a mile or so, placing them so much nearer the strange sail that they were enabled to make out that she was a brig standing on the same course as was the Flying Fish. For hours the two vessels maintained their distance, sometimes one gaining by a current of air which did not touch the other; and again, the loser making up her loss and something over in the same manner. At three o'clock matters were changed.

A gentle, but promising breeze had for some time been working out over the water toward the sloop, from the northeast quarter. As it had to encounter and overcome the inertia of the masses of still heated atmosphere which it met, its progress was slow. The dark roughening of the

glassy water that marked its advance crept out toward the ship so gradually that the patience of the young sailors on board was wellnigh exhausted; and some of them began to look on the coming wind as an enemy that did not mean, after all, to keep its promise of helping them along. Still, it did come. Slowly and steadily it advanced, till at three in the afternoon the ship felt its influence, and started forward with new life. Again the waters made a sough against the bows, and met in curling little whirlpools in the wake as the ship gently careened, and too gently glided onward once more.

The brig ahead lay meanwhile in a dead calm about four miles away, off a projecting wooded point, from which she was distant perhaps a mile. She had not a breath of wind, but lay rocking on the swells, flapping her canvas, and turning her head successively to every point of the compass. The Flying Fish kept her place on the edge of the advancing breeze, with which she moved forward, at the rate of about a mile an hour.

The glare of the fervid sun upon the waters was so strong, and the mirage-producing power of the heated air so great, that it was impossible from the ship to see much of the brig and her motions with the naked eye. But as the two drew nearer, the glass lent its usual assistance to great advantage. At four they were within three miles of each other.

As the brig was the only sail in sight, she was the centre of interest, and every glass in the ship was constantly fixed upon her. It was impossible that any important motion of hers should escape detection and attention.

A little after four, Garnet and Hartley, who had been taking turns in the use of the best spy-glass, saw three boats leave the point, and pull off toward the brig. This they had reported to Captain Merritt. The captain came up to see for himself. The rumor spread instantly through the ship, and in a little while everybody was on the spar-deck, officers and men trying to make out what was not to

be seen with any satisfaction, and indulging in sanguinary hopes.

It took the three boats about fifteen minutes to reach the brig. They were seen to pause for awhile, so near together as to be indistinguishable; and then they separated, took positions surrounding the brig, and paused again. Then a puff of smoke rose up over one of the boats, and all three rowed up to the brig, and were lost to sight, unrelieved against her black sides. The interest on board the ship was now intense, but beyond a little blue smoke which slowly rose above the merchantman and vanished in the air, nothing was seen or heard to indicate the character of the expedition they had been watching. Ten or fifteen minutes after the boats closed with the brig, they were seen to leave her again, and take position in line before her bows. Their very slow advance, and the fact that she kept her place near them, showed that they were towing her in shore.

"McKizick," asked the captain, taking the glass from his eye, "what do you think about it?"

"There's no manner of doubt, sir. If it isn't La Hembrilla's gang, it's another. I'd like to take in an investigating committee in the boats."

"Pshaw, man, you're too old to go in a boat. Send a midshipman," replied the captain with a twinkle.

"I don't feel like I'd ever be too old to go in charge of a boat expedition," said the lieutenant earnestly; "and I hope you'll give me this one—if you mean to send in."

"I am sorry to disappoint you, McKizick," answered the captain seriously; "but I cannot afford to risk my first lieutenant in a petty affair like this. Don't ask it."

McKizick looked vastly discontented, but with wisdom kept his mouth shut until he could speak in a good humor. "Who will you put in charge, captain?" he asked finally.

"Mr. Hartley. Now, sir, we are not over two miles and a half off, and the breeze holds—I think it freshens, if

anything. We had better get ready. Have the third and fourth cutters and the gig manned and armed. Let the men take cutlasses and pistols, only. Put six marines in each cutter, and four in the gig. Send Mr. Hartley, Mr. Briggs, Mr. Robbins, and the surgeon, and three of the midshipmen to me, first thing."

"Aye, aye, sir," and away went McKizick. Directly the officers whom the captain wished to see were all before him.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I am going to send you in the boats to get that brig." The middies looked at each other joyously as if it were too good to be true, but the others received the intelligence quietly, having had more experience. "Mr. Hartley, you will go in the third cutter in command of all. Mr. Briggs, take the fourth. Mr. Robbins, go in the gig, in command of the marines. Mr. Larkin will have charge of the gig and act under Mr. Hartley's orders. You, young gentlemen"—indicating the other two midshipmen—"go in the cutters. Doctor, is your steward a capable man?—does he know anything of surgery?"

"Well—yes—" admitted Bobus, whose martial spirit was aroused, and who wanted to go himself, "that is, he is pretty well-informed; but he is hardly equal to an emergency like this."

"I'm afraid we shall have to risk him then," said the captain conclusively, with one of his half-hidden twinkles. "Now, gentlemen, this is a small service, but coolness is necessary. Use your heads, and control the men all you can. Of course you'll get the brig, but I shan't feel satisfied if you lose any men. Mr. Hartley, lay the boats alongside as nearly at the same time as possible. Use your own judgment in selecting your points of attack. Let the marines cover your near approach, and don't open too soon. When you carry her, stand out to meet us; but if you need immediate assistance send a boat.

"Now, gentlemen, go and get ready, and good luck to you."

In ten minutes all was prepared, and the three boats lay alongside with the crews in them waiting with tossed oars. The ship was buzzing with excitement, the men laughing and leaning out of the ports and over the rail, to joke and talk with their envied messmates in the boats. The marines were drawn up in line on the lee side of the quarter-deck, Robbins, full of importance, rectifying the alignment of his sixteen men every few seconds. Hartley and the other officers were on the quarter-deck fully armed, each wearing his sword, with a pair of pistols slung on the belt.

The Flying Fish was now within two miles of the brig, and the pirates in the boats could be plainly seen working violently at their oars.

"Well, Hartley," said McKizick resignedly, "you've got a piece of my work to do, but I guess you'll do it as well as me. The captain wants you to shove off now. He's afraid there'll be extra trouble if we give them time to tow in shore. Drop the cutters to the gangway and stand by with the gig! Get your men in, Mr. Robbins," he commanded. "Good-by, Hartley. Good luck, old fellow."

Hartley shook hands with him, bade Garnet, who was at his side, farewell, ran down into the third cutter, and shoved off. His boat speedily cleared the ship and shot ahead, followed by the fourth cutter, and in a moment after by the gig. The ship's company, without orders but by a common impulse, darted into the lower rigging and gave three cheers. The boats crews answered lustily from their oars, and the seamen on board cheered again.

A little way from the ship, Hartley had his crew lay on their oars and let the other two boats range up close astern. He hailed them over the water: "Cutter and gig there! Keep closed up in line within a boat's length! Follow me in! Then the line dashed straight onward again, the men pulling powerfully, as if fearful the pirates would escape before they could reach the brig. Hartley

made his crew lessen their efforts, for he wanted to keep them fresh ; and the other boats had to follow his example to avoid crowding into him. Still they went along at a good pace, for the oarsmen would every now and then quicken the stroke in spite of his constant watching.

The pirates continued to exert themselves to the utmost to tow the brig to the shore, until the boats of the sloop were within three-quarters of a mile. Then they suddenly cast off the towline and seemed thrown into confusion and undecided what to do. One boat actually started for the shore, but returned in a minute ; and they all three rowed back to the brig on the side which was away from their enemies. They were seen, as they leaped on board, thirty or forty in number ; and they disappeared, hiding behind the rail. The man-of-war boats never checked their course for this, but pulled straight on.

About four hundred yards distant from the merchantman, Hartley stood up and ordered, "OARS !" The men ceased rowing, sitting with horizontal blades and glancing over their shoulders at the near enemy. "Come alongside !" hailed Hartley. The other two ranged up, one on each side, and near to him. "Now, pay attention ! The gig will go under the bows, I'll take the gangway, and you, Mr. Briggs, the quarter—all on this side. We must try to get in at exactly the same time. *Mind that, men !* You giggersmen are in the fastest boat : keep back, or you'll be cut to pieces before we come up. *Mind*, we want to go alongside *together !*—then aboard, and to work !" The men roared out one irrepressible hurrah. "Keep abreast just as you are till *I stand up* ; then each boat go to her place, and the marines open fire without further orders. *Keep abreast ! GIVE WAY !*"

The excited seamen could not restrain themselves, but disregarding every instruction, bent to their oars uttering joyful yells. Fortunately Larkin was able to hold the small crew of the gig somewhat in hand, so that the three boats maintained their places in line.

The pirates began an irregular rapid fire. Bullets hummed overhead, skipped on the water dashing up spray, and occasionally struck the boats themselves, or splintered the blade of an oar. No one was hurt, however, and the singing missiles only raised the men's fierce spirits higher and made them row the harder. The nearer they got, the closer did the flying bullets seem to graze; but not a shot was returned till they were within a hundred yards. Then Hartley stood up, and the marines began to pepper away.

The men at the oars gave one wild, shrill cheer together, as they threw on the supple blades their whole strength. They toiled silently, but like giants, their faces pale with tremendous exertion, their eyes glaring, the sweat rolling down their gripped jaws. Hartley, Briggs, and Larkin stood up, and urged them on with excited words and waving swords. Such a speed quickly took them over the dangerous hundred yards, and the three wheeled together at almost the same instant, darting alongside to their appointed places.

Hurrahing and yelling, the seamen sprung over the brig's rail, cutlass in hand, and threw themselves upon the pirates, who were scattered about the deck without organization. Pistol-shots, shouts, cutlass clashings, and profanity, made a promiscuous din, though few men fell in proportion to the noise and savage vigor of the attack. In a moment the marines followed the seamen with fixed bayonets.

The pirates, who had lost several men, were dismayed at the fierceness of their foe, and already almost yielding. They ceased their weak resistance at the sight of the new force, and fled precipitately, leaving most of their weapons behind. Jumping into their boats, which were moored alongside, they cut the painters and shoved off in a hurry, while the sailors, leaning over the rail, taunted them and slashed at them viciously with their cutlasses.

"Victory!" shouted a burly Englishman. "Hurray,

my 'arties, and a hip! hip! Hurray-y-y!" Everybody stopped to join in that magniloquent crow.

As every pistol and musket was empty, the pirates got away very easily. Robbins had the marines reload and commence "firing by file," but it took some time for them to begin. The men rushed to the boats and commenced to jump in, all for following the pirates up, but Hartley, remembering the captain's injunction, stopped them with decision.

His attention was quickly called to a conflict on the brig's forecastle. A negro man stood there swinging one of the windlass bars about his head, thus keeping clear a circle around which stood a dozen sailors, cutting at him with their swords. He was in a fair way to come to grief for the crowd of seamen was increasing, and they were as angry as hornets. Hartley ran forward. "Step back, men!" he ordered. They obeyed him. "Put down that bar," said he to the darkey, who now held the bar raised threateningly, while he glanced about the ring of foes with sullen ferocity. "You'll be a dead man in five minutes if you try to fight it out."

"Keep cl'ar o' *me!*" responded the negro, sullenly.

Hartley saw that he was in the condition in which the African has no sense left, except the sense of obstinacy, and that he would die before he would give up. "Drop the bar!" he commanded sternly. The negro only raised it higher. "Grab him behind, Lewis!" The darkey whirled around to strike down the foe expected on that side, and quick as a flash Hartley sprang upon him. Throwing his arms around him he pinioned him, and in half a minute the seamen had him tied.

Hartley was then at leisure to look about him. The officers and crew of the brig were all lying aft, their hands and feet bound with cruel security. It took but a few seconds to cut the ligatures and release them, but not one of them could rise till the sailor-men restored circulation in their limbs by hard chafing.

The master of the brig was in a great hurry to get up, and attempted it so soon that he nearly fell over. However he managed to totter to the lieutenant. "Shake hands, capt'ing!" said he in a weak voice: "I've got to thank you for this brave rescue. I guessed aour jig was pretty considerable tarnation nigh up, for awhile. Ef I'd ben smart I'd a' run back to you this mornin' ensted of away from you. I hadn't oughter shaved the p'int so close—it warn't a mite smart in me, but I was in a hurry to fetch the market, and everythin' hed ben prosperous, and I was countin' more on the spec I was goin' to make for the owners in Bosting than anythin' else. I tell you what, capt'ing, you saved my owners a mighty vallyble cargo in the old Mercutio, and I reckon you saved Hiram Doolittle—that's me."

He would have gone on, being apparently a voluble man under any circumstances, but Hartley left him to see if any of the men had been hurt. With the exception of one whose arm had been broken by a bullet and another who had received a fearful gash in the leg from a knife, none were seriously wounded; though bruises and slight cuts were very common.

By this time the breeze had reached the brig. He had the towline hauled in and passed out aft to the boats, and then stood across free to intercept the Flying Fish. He crossed the track on which she was coming, and hove to. The sloop swept down slowly, backed her main-yard near him, and hailed.

On board the Flying Fish all hands had watched the boats go in, with an almost agonized interest. When the column paused while Hartley arranged his order of battle, they cheered. When the boats started in such fine style, to close so gamely, they cheered. When the pirates opened fire, and they could hear the popping reports of their muskets, and see the curling powder smoke, they cheered again. While the boats made their last spurt, and the marines fired, and the brig's side was gained, and the

attacking party clambered on board, they cheered wildly and continuously. And when they saw the boat flag Hartley had bent to the signal halliards rise swiftly to the peak in token of success, what a magnificent crowning cheer of delight they gave! They ran about the spar-deck shaking hands and rejoicing.

Captain Merritt was so anxious to know the results of the expedition that he would not wait for a report, but hailed. "Brig ahoy! What brig is that?"

He felt relieved when Hartley, who knew what caused his haste, stepped to the brig's quarter himself and answered, "Mercutio of Boston. We are all right, sir."

"Come on board, sir!"

"Aye, aye, sir."

He was soon on the quarter-deck making his report. The captain was pleased with the manner in which the duty had been performed, and did not scruple to say so. He complimented Hartley openly, in the hearing of the men and of his brother officers. Hartley felt happy. He thought, "If Mary could only have seen us go in! and could hear my praises!—it would make her proud of me."

By and by Mr. Hiram Doolittle, having found out that Hartley was not the "captain," came over in one of his own boats to return thanks. He was shown into the cabin and had a long talk, and when he came out it was with a fixed resolution not to risk his vessel in order to save half an hour's time by running close to any more p'int. He asked to see the officers who had been in the expedition, and went into both the ward-room and the steerage to say good-by. All the while he carried with him a small but seemingly heavy bag. Just before leaving the ship he called Hartley aside mysteriously. "Lieutenant," said he, "there's a hundred silver dollars in this here bag. 'Tain't much, but it's the best I can do, for I'm not over and above wealthy. I want you to give each o' them men that helped me out this mornin' a dollar, and divide the balance among you officers as you calc'late to

be correct." Hartley could not repress a slight smile as he involuntarily calc'lated what his share of the lucre would be. He hastened to assure Captain Doolittle that they were not allowed to take money for protecting American citizens, that the country paid them in full for such services. The grateful Yankee seemed really disappointed to hear it, so Hartley told him that if he would leave twenty dollars it would buy the men a treat, to which there would be no objection and which they would like better than money. This satisfied worthy Doolittle, who straightway departed into his own craft and filled away with his bowsprit pointing due south.

The encounter with this gang showed Captain Merritt that he was far enough to the west. From the description given by the crew of the *Mercutio* he was satisfied that this was not La Hembrilla's party. The inference was natural that to find the vessel he had been hunting, or to get news of her, he must go back. He was confirmed by this in the belief that her secret lair lay about thirty miles east of the Cobre. Well pleased with the result of the trip, he ordered the course to be laid for the river.

Sounds of jollity were heard in the steerage all evening. The warrant officers were in, and Larkin, who had got a slight flesh wound in the arm, was telling the story of the fight. He brought out the ludicrous side of the engagement, moved thereto be the excessive pride of Godolphin and Young in their first service. He told how, as the three boats shot up to the brig's side, Mr. Robbins stood up in the stern-sheets of the gig and commanded in a stentorian voice, "Fix bayonets! Prepare to deploy as squirmishers!"

"And when I got over the bows, gentlemen, and looked aft, what should I see, rising above the quarter-rail like a fiery rocket, but the ferocious face of Porp. Never had I suspected him of such a fierce disposition. Waving his trusty blade, he uttered a wild yell, and, all alone and unsupported, threw himself upon the whole body of pirates. I thought his doom was sealed, and in fact, nothing but

his marvellous powers of fence saved him. While contending heroically with a ring of the pirates who were thrusting at him, he managed not only to parry their stabs, but when pistols were fired at him he batted the balls aside with the flat of his sword. But he did not long remain upon the defensive. With one sweep of his flashing steel he decapitated two of the pirates; then rushing upon them, he began lunging right and left with such deadly force and velocity that his path was strewn with corpses. The pirates fled affrighted into their boats and pulled away for dear life."

"Now Larkin—" commenced the annoyed youngster, amid the chuckles of the party.

"Silence, friend Porp, your modesty is a crime. Valor must be known that it may be imitated by others.

"He was about to pursue them by swimming, when fortunately for them, he espied a rind of cheese on deck, and at once sat down to eat it. Overcome by his exertions he fell asleep, and there I found him when I got aft. I awoke him with the greatest difficulty—only the words 'breakfast is ready' made him stir. All this took place in four seconds of time."

"Now Larkin," said Porp, much grieved, "you know that ain't so."

"Perhaps it was five. Mr. Young was less successful. I missed him during the conflict and asked for him when it was over. He lay in the cutter, apparently devoid of life. The boat-keeper told me that he had fallen overboard, overcome by terror at Porp's yell, and that it had taken a long time to fasten on to his clothes with the boat-hook. Finally, he dragged him in nearly dead. We only saved him by rolling him on a barrel of whiskey and keeping Porp so far away that his voice could not be heard."

"Didn't the brig's folks make no fight?" asked Thick.

"Yes, the best they knew how. They had some rusty old muskets they loaded up, but they didn't begin to shoot till the pirates were on board, and they were so badly scared to aim very straight. They were all tied before they had time to spit on their hands."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE following evening found the ship anchored in the mouth of the river and preparations making for an expedition. The boats were not lowered, but everything was got ready to put in them before sunset. As soon as it was fairly dark, they were called away, and Garnet received his orders. These were to ascend the stream as quietly as possible, keeping in the middle of it, to make an occasional sounding, and to go on till midnight, or till they got above a seven-foot channel. If he found *La Hembrilla*, he was to use his judgment about attacking.

The moon was three hours high when the expedition left the ship. The boats were pulled with muffled oars, and their progress was slow and silent, for the current of the *Cobre* was so strong that no rapid headway could be made. They passed through scenes of beauty. The air was full of vapor, which hung trembling in the pale light. The night had all the stillness of the tropics. The moon, as it sank, cast lengthening and peculiarly black shadows from the tree-crowned hills upon the smooth surface of the flowing stream. Valleys leading to the river afforded a chance for the light to stream through and pour itself out flat on the water. Where the stream curved east or west long reaches were lighted up.

It was a narrow little river, not over a hundred yards wide, and in some places the inclining trees so nearly met overhead that it was like passing under a dark arch. In one spot, two bluffs stood up perpendicular, facing and near each other. The opening looked like a mighty gate. It was hard to get through it, because the contracted stream ran very swiftly between the opposing walls.

For three hours the boats toiled slowly up, the only sounds being the dip of the oars, the murmur of the cleft water, and the low directions about steering given by the

officers to the coxswains. Toward the close of that time, a soft and sustained noise, like that of moving waters, was heard over a hill; and it grew momentarily more distinct. Turning to the east around a sharp bend, they came upon a series of rapids, and little cascades, on which the setting moon was throwing its last rays. It was beautiful, even in that insufficient light, and they would all have lingered at the foot of the aqueous slope to admire; but the head of navigation was reached, their object accomplished, and Garnet gave the order to return. He did not enforce silence going back, allowing the men to talk and smoke by way of rest after their hard work. They enjoyed the swift easy row down stream, and in one hour were back on board.

In the morning Garnet was sent with the two cutters, and a supply of provisions to last in case the ship were called away on a chase, and instructions to make a day's survey of the stream as far up as the time would permit. The ship was gotten under way and stood off to the eastward toward El Cáyó del Pescadór.

Soon after, the negro captured two days before was missed, and a strict search showed that he was not in the ship. They could only surmise that he had managed to elude the sentry in the night, and, with his irons on, had slipped overboard. There was a chance that he had reached the shore, for the ship lay very near it, and it was possible for a good swimmer, though pinioned, to go a little way through the water; but the chance was so small that they all regarded him as drowned.

The darkey had been very much frightened after his sullen fit passed off, and had cried and blubbered; but he would not talk. He asked to see Hartley, and at first seemed disposed to make a clean breast of his guilt in connection with the gang; but something made him change his mind.

"I'se much obleeged to you for not lettin' 'em kill me, Moss," he said.

"You had better be," Hartley answered. "If I had not been there the men would have killed you in a minute. What do you want?"

"Will dey hang me?"

"I can't tell about that. Your best chance is to tell what you know, so we can catch the rest."

The darkey broke out crying again, exclaiming repeatedly, "Wisht I was back to old Moss's ;" but he would say no more.

When the Flying Fish was hove to off the point of the key, Hartley was sent in the gig to make an examination. There was little to be seen. The key consisted almost entirely of yellow and white and gray sand, piled up in rolling mounds, with a scanty vegetation struggling for life here and there. It was nearly circular, and about five hundred yards in diameter. Hartley went over the whole of it. He took two of the gig's men, and went first in the direction from which the pirates had come with the box, but after awhile their tracks ceased, and he had no further indication to guide him. He pushed on in the same direction, however, and in a hollow between two mounds he found entangled in some low bushes a scrap of paper. On it was a list of names, written in two long columns. He read, "John Hackett, James Arrowson, Benjamin Markley, Tom Titus, Bill Kitt, Alonzo Gomez, Mark Jones, Antonio Largues, Jan Alsen, Pedro Panza, Peter Devitt, William Jackson, Jno. Peters," and more. There were in all about fifty names, and he took it to be a muster roll of the crew of La Hembrilla. Carefully folding the document, he put it away, thinking it might be of use in the future. Then he examined the key closely, crossing it several times, and making a complete tour by the beach. He finally brought up at the boat. As had been arranged, the ship was gone, having by this time probably reached the river, where she went to be near her surveying party.

Hartley was to sail down when he was ready, but, as he had the day before him and it was still early, he made no

haste. Directing the crew to remain near the boat, he strolled back toward the centre of the key, where stood a sand mound of so much greater dimensions and height than the others as to be the feature of the island. This hillock was crowned with the species of coarse tough wiry grass, which seems able to thrive in the most barren spots and is usually found in such places, binding the poor soil together and giving it permanency against dry gales by the involved mattings of its intertwined roots. Here Hartley sat down.

For awhile he amused himself by sketching the wilderness of rough rocks and little keys which studded the western water ; but this occupation could not hold its place in his mind with the thoughts that came swarming. His pencil moved mechanically, then became idle.

He speculated on La Hembrilla, wondering where her refuge could lay, and imagined half a dozen combats in which he himself figured as the discoverer of the pirates' haunt, the outwitted of their cunning, and their vanquisher and captor in glorious fight. He recalled the events which had occurred since they had sailed from Santa Cruz, and his pulses leapt at the remembrance of the short successful struggle upon the brig's deck. Again he longed that Mary had seen him wave his sword leading his men on to victory ; and then he thought of her with a deep tenderness. He went over her many perfections, her goodness, sweetness, vivacity, beauty, each grace of person and of mind ; and he hugged himself, like a miser counting over his dollars, to remember that each and all were his. His vanity was pleased, and his pride rising. Then better thoughts came. He wondered why he, of all men, should be singled out for so much joy, and he reflected upon his defects of character and the means of modifying them so that the dear girl's happiness might flow straight along without a break.

He lay down upon his back in the wiry grass, shielded his head from the sun with the portfolio, and gazed up into the sky. Strange fancies soon came floating through his

mind, visions mixed of heaven and earth floated above. His body was unfelt and he seemed to himself like a spirit which might fly away when it would. The sighing of the wind in the grass was in his ears a sound

"That far away did rave
On alien shores."—*Tennyson*.

It was the *dolce far niente*, or he was eating the lotos maybe, or absorbing poetry from nature ; but whatever it was, the pleasure was too delicate and ethereal to last any son of earth very long. An idea stole in unwelcome, a thing of doubt which broke the charm. A remainder of his uneasiness about Mary's affection came over him, and he instantly arose.

Looking at his watch he found that the men would have a late dinner, even if the good breeze held, a discovery that made him start back. Before he left the mound he instinctively took a last glance around the horizon. Something, a transient gleam of white in the far southeast, caught his eye. "A sail?—or a gull's wing?" he thought. He gazed intently and thought he saw the speck of white again, but it appeared distinctly no more.

Dismissing it from his mind, he hurried to the boat. To avoid a tramp through the loose yielding sand, he turned to the left, that he might the sooner gain the hard beach. Three mounds lay near it, in such an exact line north and south that he noticed their uniformity. The northern one of the three was higher and more pointed than the others, standing up like a captain. He walked between them, gained the beach, and soon reached the boat.

Setting the two large sails, the long lean gig lay far over on her side for a moment ; then, gathering way, righted and darted off arrow-like before the fresh wind. A quick run through her own spray and foam carried her to the ship, and before long Hartley was comfortably eating his dinner.

He found Garnet at the smoking place with the other

officers. All seemed to be teasing Dularge, who was taking it very sourly. When Hartley appeared he went away.

Hartley asked what was the matter, and after a little hesitation they told him.

It seemed that Dularge had imagined himself in love with Mary, and had thought about the propriety of undertaking her conquest. He made a confidant of Doctor Bobus, much to the annoyance of the surgeon, who, while he did not fancy Dularge and did not care to have the keeping of his secrets, had an admiration for Mary and a tolerable certainty about her affair with Hartley. The inflated and lady-killing air with which Dularge conveyed his sentiments and intentions was still more disgusting to a man with Bobus's gentlemanly instincts. "You see, Doc," said Dularge, "I think I've been running loose long enough. A young fellow must have his swing, you know, but by Jove! he has to take the example of old fellows like you, and settle down some day, you know. Don't you think so?"

"The earlier the better," replied the doctor dryly.

"Just so. Exactly what I think. A fellow's bound to marry and settle down some time, you know; and, if he finds a woman to suit him pretty well, he'd better sacrifice himself a few years sooner, for fear of not finding another as good, you know. By Jove! the good ones are none too plenty. Now, Doc, I leave it to you if I'm likely to come across as pretty a piece, and as rich, too, as Mary Dewhurst very soon."

The doctor was in his state-room blockaded by the buzzing tormentor. "Are you sure you can induce Miss Dewhurst to be your wife?" he asked, in a tone that would have informed most men.

"Ah," replied Dularge with inimitable serene complacency, "just leave that to me. I have had some little experience with the fair sex. I fancy that is all right."

Bobus felt so irritated and contemptuous that he could cheerfully have kicked him. "If you can marry Miss Dew-

hurst, you'd better," said he; adding mentally, "for she would make you behave more like a man before other people." He went on, aloud, in a rather impatient voice, "Let me pass through the door, if you please. I want to go into the bay."

"Well!" thought Dularge, surprised; "hang me if I don't believe the old bigamy has an eye on her himself." He chuckled at the notion of any one else trying to get ahead of him in the good graces of a lady.

On the morning about which we are writing Dularge had been observing his lovely countenance in a glass, and his soul was secretly troubled. He went again to the doctor; found him reading in his state-room, penned him in, and opened on him:

"Doctor, you know I mentioned my intentions with regard to Miss Mary Dewhurst. Something you said about a chance against me, set me to thinking about it; and I confess I am uneasy."

"Well."

"You see, doctor, if there's anything the ladies go for it's personal appearance. I think I do passably well on that score"—he drew himself up with an air—"but you know the women are so confoundedly observing."

"Well."

"The least little thing out of the way, and they see it sure. Now, doctor, I have discovered one defect in my personal appearance, and I want to consult you about it."

"What is it?"

"I never noticed it before, but I think my nose is just a little to one side—to the right—don't you see it?"

The doctor looked, and though Dularge's nose was apparently in the middle of his face, he answered, "Oh, yes; distinctly," hoping to be rid of him by acquiescence.

"I thought so," said Dularge sadly; "I was afraid so. Can you do anything for it?"

Doctor Bobus was suddenly and very strongly tempted. His dignity made him dislike practical jokes, and he would

not usually condescend to play them ; but here was an opportunity he could not resist.

"Well," he replied, in a dubious tone, "it may be possible. Is it congenital?"

"Con— what?"

"Congenital. I mean have your father and mother the same distortion?"

"No," replied Dularge, slightly bridling up. "My parents are both remarkably fine looking."

"How long have you been in this condition?"

"I don't know. I only noticed it a little while ago."

"Oh, recent, eh? It is probably curable then. Probably the growth of the distortion can be arrested, and the organ restored to its normal condition by proper treatment."

"I'm very glad to hear it. Let me have the medicine now, won't you?"

The doctor seemed to be musing. "No," he muttered. "No use. He would never bear it."

"Tell me what you would have to do, doctor. Is it very painful? I could stand a good deal, and it won't do to let it get worse than it is now."

"Mr. Dularge, the remedy is very painful. I doubt your ability to bear it. Your case requires what the faculty term heroic treatment."

"Why do they call it that?" asked Dularge anxiously.

"Because it requires a great deal of heroism in the patient to endure it long enough to effect a radical cure."

"Well, tell me what it is anyhow," urged Dularge, now grown very nervous. "Maybe I could stand it."

"Oh, it's simple enough. I merely introduce a support into your left nostril which prevents a further deflection of the bridge, and sets up a counter-irritation that causes a gradual return to nature. But the support plugs the nostril entirely, and its pressure on the tissues and mucous membrane becomes very painful."

"I've a great mind to try it," said Dularge reflectively ;

"it 'll do no hurt even if I can't keep it in. I will. Come, doctor, fix her up!"

"Very well, Mr. Dularge, but please remember it will take some time, and that I endeavored to dissuade you."

"All right, plug her up. I'll take the risk."

The doctor gravely and deliberately made a large hard wad of pink cotton-wool, which he stuffed up Dularge's nose with great care. Then he wrote a prescription, and sent it to his steward by a servant, who speedily returned with a small glass syringe full of a brown liquid. The doctor injected this upon the cotton-wool, told Dularge to breathe through his mouth and be patient, and dismissed him. Then the doctor laughed very heartily for ten minutes in his own peculiar manner. He always laughed internally, without noise, and it seemed painful to him; so much so that he held in his sides with his hands as if to keep from bursting.

Dularge went to quarters, and attracted attention by the swelled condition of his nose, already getting pink. The captain saw it and wondered, and so did McKizick, and so did the men. After quarters the officers asked, one after another, as each met him, "What's the matter with your nose?" This was not pleasant to him. He answered each shortly that it was sore and the doctor had been fixing it for him.

By and by it began to hurt, and he could not refrain from stroking and caressing it in a manner that excited laughter and caused further inquiry. He was so non-committed on the tender subject that curiosity was heightened, and, as soon as he made an opportunity by leaving the ward-room, everybody went to the doctor and demanded an explanation. He at first pleaded the confidence reposed in medical men, but they urged so hard and the joke was so good that he had to tell them. He broke down several times, and was forced to take a turn around the ward-room, laughing agonizedly and holding his sides. They laughed, too, when they heard the story. The doctor begged

them to let Dularge alone for a few hours, and take out their amusement in watching him while he remained ignorant that they knew.

Presently he came back with his nose looking more bulged than ever and grown quite red. He kept putting his hand to it, stroking it, pressing it, and making wry faces. He went in his room and got on the bed, taking a hand-glass with him, and the rest of the mess found frequent occasion to pass his door and steal a glance at him, as he lay ruefully regarding the swollen member. The frequent gushes of half-suppressed laughter which he heard outside made him curious, and he called several times to ask what was the fun.

All the while the nose was becoming more irritated, and at last he felt unable to endure it any longer. He was heard to exclaim, "By Jove! I can't stand it!" and then he appeared in the ward-room, holding the organ in his hand very delicately and looking around surprised at the merriment which greeted him. He stopped to ask no questions, but ran to the surgeon's state-room at once. The doctor was quietly pretending to read a book.

"I say, doctor, this is worse than I thought, you know. How much longer will it take?"

"My dear sir, the time is very indefinite. Sometimes the cure comes sooner, sometimes later. You can never tell until you are cured," replied Bobus.

"Do you think it will take very long for me, doctor?"

"I do—a considerable space of time," answered the surgeon.

"But, doctor, it won't hurt any worse, will it?"

"Of course it will. Your sufferings are only begun, Mr. Dularge."

"But, doctor, I can't stand it, you know. How much longer do you think it will take?"

"Well, sir, as near as I can say, if you keep the support constantly in place, and do not unduly excite the mucous membrane by rubbing with the hand as you have

been doing, and do not catch cold, and breathe all the time through your mouth, and be patient, and the case progress favorably, it will take—”

“How long, doctor?”

“About two years and six months.”

“Good Lord!” ejaculated Dularge in despair, “as long as that! Why, I can’t stand it, you know!”

A burst of laughter from the officers outside, who had slipped to the door and overheard, explained it all to Dularge. Casting one furious glance at the doctor, who was twisting and writhing in his chair in a convulsion of mirth, he departed to his room, where he quickly picked out the wad of cotton with a pin. For a long time afterward all that was needed to make Dularge stop disgusted in one of his magnificent speeches was to ask him, “How’s your nose?”

The cutters returned at dark, Garnet having completed his rough chart of the river as far up as the ship could go.

The captain now determined to leave the vicinity of the Cobre for a time, and to try to get information further east. He thought it likely that the pirates had abandoned that cruising-ground, temporarily at least, as he had seen nothing of La Hembrilla for several days. It seemed useless for the sloop to stay when she was away, and in addition he thought that orders might be awaiting him in Santa Cruz, to which port the commodore expected him to go occasionally. After cruising three or four days longer without incident they started up the coast.

They touched at several places, most of them small villages, in each of which careful attempts were made to find out something of the schooner. Officers went ashore and called upon the officials, and citizens were invited to visit the ship. The men were sent on liberty, also, and the petty officers instructed to pump the natives. It was all useless. Though the conduct of the people, under their close watching and frequent interrogation, was sometimes suspicious, they had nothing to tell, all professing ignorance,

or declaring that they had never heard of such a craft as *La Hembrilla*.

In a week the *Flying Fish* reached Santiago de Cuba, an interesting place, walled in by mountains, possessing a fine harbor, and having, in addition, at that time, the reputation of being the birthplace of the yellow fever. It was formerly averred that the fever always originated in that city, and could invariably be traced back to it as a starting point. At that season it was healthy, and no fears were felt of any bad effect following a visit.

A little Portuguese gun-brig lay at anchor in the harbor. She was the image of naval slouchiness. Her masts were badly stayed, her head booms curved upward, her yards were out of square, with some of the braces hanging in bights, and the lower lifts were so slack that the yard-arms drooped in the meanest merchant-ship fashion. Her hull, once black, had grown of an ashy grayish color from long lack of paint; and wherever there was a piece of iron-work outside a streak of red rust ran from it to the water's edge.

When the *Flying Fish* anchored, Hartley was sent to this unique man-of-war to make inquiries, she showing no sign of meaning to pay the usual official visit. She wore a deserted air, no one noticing his approach. When he mounted the side he looked up and down the deck without seeing a soul under her baggy awnings, but a negro boy about four years old. The little fellow was very black, very fat, very dirty, and eyed him solemnly without a word. His face shone "like the moon in her fourteenth night" with grease, and his only garment was a short cotton shirt, almost as black as himself. The deck was covered with a varied assortment of grease spots of all sizes and ages.

"You are the captain, I presume," said Hartley, politely touching his cap to the little darkey. The niggeret uttered a loud wail of fear, and ran off as fast as his chubby legs would carry him, bawling the while. He disappeared down a sort of booby-hatch that seemed to lead into the cabin.

While Hartley was wondering at his reception, a sleepy, stupid-looking Portuguese came up the ladder with a glass in his hand. He advanced calmly, and waited to know the visitor's business. The little darkey had followed him back whimpering, and now stood silently behind him, clinging to his legs and occasionally peeping timidly out at the terrible clean stranger. Spite of his crying, he showed no trace of tears; water could no more remain upon his oily visage than upon the back of a duck.

"Do you speak English?" asked Hartley.

The sailor shook his head.

"Hablas Español?"

"Poco," was the brief reply.

"En donde está el capitano?"

"No hay. Queda." And the sailor calmly walked back to the hatch and went below.

After awhile there came up a half-dressed officer, as sleepy-looking as the sailor. Seeing Hartley, his lethargy left him, and he explained that the captain was ashore and all hands were taking a siesta, according to the common custom. The vessel was his Portuguese Majesty's brig-of-war *La Madonna de Coimbra*. He had heard of *La Hembrilla*—who had not?—but had never seen her. In fact *La Madonna* had been in Santiago only three months. She would doubtless pursue the accursed rover before long—it was the mission of gallant sailors to sweep the pirates from off the face of the whole ocean—but they had not yet recovered from the arduous passage around Point Maysi. Besides, what haste? The accursed rover was too swift. Why not wait till she came into Santiago?

Hartley finished his business as soon as possible, and returned to the ship as rich as he left. When the midshipmen heard the brig's name, they dubbed her "*The Greasy Virgin*."

CHAPTER XIX.

THAT night at about half-past eight, Hartley went up and joined Garnet, who had the deck. The two liked once in a while to get together in that way, and open their hearts to one another. The constant movement of walking seemed to free the channels of speech, which run from mind through mouth, by ear, into mind; so that on deck in the night they always came nearer to each other than at any other time. Many a keen criticism of character was uttered, many a poetic figure expanded, many a hard friendly word passed, which at any other time and place would not have been spoken. Hartley saved up his poems against these occasions, in order to give Garnet a chance to pull them to pieces.

Another reason why they were more communicative at such times was that one's face never speaks by night. Neither of them liked to betray emotion. Garnet especially detested to show any weakness, and he was a man whose well-spring of sympathy lay not very deep under his dry sandy crust.

It must not be supposed that they talked continuously, however, for the "flashes of silence" were frequent. Only something very new and interesting ever kept them going long: a few remarks usually satisfied them, and the rest was filled with suggested thoughts, which now and then found utterance. When one of them wandered off on something else the talk would break out again for awhile.

"Well, Harry, that you? Glad you come."

"Yes. Come to take a turn with you. We hav'n't been on deck together for a month."

"No," was all Garnet had to say, and they had a walk up and down the deck for a bit.

"Hal," said Garnet, "have you any idea how much a man walks in a year on watch?"

"No: but I suppose it's something considerable."

"Let's consider it. I have been going over it in my head. I stepped off the distance from the fiferail to the boom sheet just thirty yards, and I have often noticed that it takes me about a minute to go over that distance three times. That's about three miles an hour. I suppose a man walks three-quarters of his watch, doesn't he?"

"Yes, fully," replied Hartley. "More, on the average."

"Say three-quarters. Six hours in twenty-four—that would be four thousand nine hundred miles a year, when you were standing four watches, or six thousand five hundred in a ship with only three."

"Whew! I had no idea it was so much," said Hartley.

"You can't make it any less, unless you walk slower. Just think, I am walking five thousand miles a year for the good of my country. We ought to have tough understandings, Hal."

"So we have, my boy."

"What was Robbins talking to you about?" asked Garnet.

"He asked me who was Charlotte Curdy."

"Curdy, eh?"

"Yes; so he pronounced it. I told him he was thinking of Charlotte Corday, and gave him the story of how she stabbed Marat when he was in his bath, and sacrificed her life to rid France of the monster. He said he had heard something about it, but thought the name was Curdy, and that it was Mew-rat she killed."

"Did he appreciate her motive?"

"Not in the least; but he admired her pluck very much," replied Hartley.

"Singular what satisfaction he has in life."

"He saddens and disgusts me."

Then ensued a pause of several minutes, after which Hartley recounted his visit to the greasy Madonna, and his reception by the quaint little nigger. He ended by

saying, "Strange how men can be satisfied with such a useless existence."

"Just what I said about Robbins. We see the same thing every day in one shape or another, but I cannot become reconciled to such—such a—"

"To such an ignoble yielding to the force of circumstances?" supplied Hartley.

"Yes. I can understand that the difference in men's natures inclines some to idleness: but how can they be satisfied? I suppose they get used to it."

"Most of them seem as content as busy men are."

"What is content, Hal?"

"Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
Ease and alternate labor, useful life,
Progressive virtue, and approving heaven."

"That's the poetry for it. Now what is it?"

"To have a good occupation, and a sure income, a sweet-tempered, smart, pretty wife, and a few children, a love for books and a philosophical disposition."

"If turnips were watches, I'd wear one," said Garnet.

"Well, what do you say it is?"

"A mixture of congenial work and leisure in proportions suited to the man."

"That ought to account for Robbins's contentment."

"Why?" asked Garnet.

"No work is congenial to him, and he has nothing to do. There's your mixture—whiskey, diluted with whiskey, and flavored with whiskey—proportions suited to the man. You leave out the wife in your estimate. Honestly, Will, don't you think her necessary?"

"Honestly—yes. I have thought it all over, and I am willing to leap into the bottomless pit of matrimony if I can persuade Miss Terrell to jump, too."

"Bravo! good! You musn't expect her to pin her apron-strings to your coat-tails, and drag you in. She's not the woman for that."

"I said if I could persuade her."

"You don't mean it, Will?"

"I dare say I would be a better man, married. But we are not certain of finding the ladies in Santa Cruz when we get there."

"That's true, but I sincerely hope we may, on your account as well as my own. You would fall in love with Isabel Terrell, if you had a chance to see something of her. Confound your deliberation, Will! you just threw away a week of splendid opportunities."

Garnet laughed dryly. "They wouldn't have been so valuable to me as you think, Harry. I haven't your—well, let's call it your executive ability."

"No. Pshaw! Better get me to attend to this little affair for you."

"On the principle that a man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client," replied Garnet, scornfully.

"You'll never help yourself."

"So I had better get help. Exactly. Having had great experience in this line, you are prepared to execute country orders with promptness and despatch. It might be safe to trust you, since Miss Mary is in the same house."

"You know well enough what I mean. It's absurd to waste good chances trying to make up your mind to what is clear at the first glance."

"It might not have been so clear to me. You don't look at it as I do, and there's no use talking. Perhaps I did not entirely waste my chances, as you say."

"There, you can't pass yourself off for a sly lover. That is a new rôle for you!"

Garnet was more in earnest than his friend could believe. Presently Hartley broke the silence again.

"Speaking of content, did you ever see any one more blissfully satisfied than Dularge? He isn't handsome or smart, or well-informed, or a good officer or respectable in any way, yet he thinks himself all that and more."

He can't even talk, though he believes himself to be eloquent."

"He lacks the four ingredients."

"Of what?"

"Good conversation."

"What are they?" asked Hartley.

"Sense, truth, humor, and wit."

"That's a tip-top analysis. Whose is it?"

"Sir William Temple's, I believe."

"Where?"

"Don't know. I never read him."

They walked awhile longer, and Garnet asked, "Tell me, Hal, what good does your Miss Mary do you now?"

"She is my 'dear under-song in clamor's hour.'"

"Poetry as usual. Wonder if I were to get into love it would set me to rhyming. Hope not. That would be another inducement to try to marry reasonably."

"Well, that wasn't my own verse. I couldn't possibly lay bare my feelings at the present time, so I just flung in the first words that came handy. You must excuse me."

"Certainly. I suppose there must be a forbidden ground in such cases. I can't see where it begins, but I shall not feel hard if you warn me off."

"Will, I've been a boy in this whole thing. I just yielded to my impulses and wishes without any consideration for her, or thought about her happiness. I don't deserve it. I have gone ahead like a boy, and I have been successful; but I'm only now beginning to understand and appreciate what I have gained. I don't deserve it—but I vow I will, by heaven! I will try all my life long to make her happy. Henceforth, I'll be a man for her sake."

"I am truly glad to hear you say so, Harry. Try not to forget it all before morning—it is what you need to remember. If you have found it out for yourself it may do you good. I speak plainly, but 'faithful are the wounds of a friend,' you know. I believe you are right in your

high estimate of Miss Mary. You have fallen on your feet as usual."

"That's all true, old fellow."

Another pause, then Hartley resumed. "I do hope we shall find them there. There's a young Englishman named Shelley writing some very deep and beautiful poetry now."

"I've *read* some of it."

"You mean you can't understand it. Never mind; study on it. He's in Italy now, I believe. There's a piece of his begins—

"Many a green isle needs must be
In the deep wide sea of misery,
Or the mariner, worn and wan,
Never thus could voyage on—"

"Well, Santa Cruz is the greenest island—the only green one to me—in this whole miserable sea."

"One glass of good whiskey would make the whole Caribbean as pleasant as punch, in five minutes."

"You're inclined to scoff at me. Will, you know how a Cape pigeon flies?"

"Certainly."

"With a swift, curving, horizontal sweep; and how pretty the little things are, and sometimes they come suddenly, when you are not expecting them, and cross before your eyes, and are gone before you can turn your head."

"I've often noticed that."

"Just so with some of our thoughts—some of our best. We have to look very quickly as they pass, or they are gone before fairly shaped in the mind, before we have seen enough to recognize them when they come again."

"How do they come again?"

"In memory."

"More likely in some fellow's book. There's nothing new."

"Why, that very thought is its own instance. I caught it on the wing and showed it to you."

"Like as not a dozen men had caught it before you did."

It's a rather lame bird, anyhow, isn't it? Did you never hear of flocks of pensive, dove-like reflections, or of eagle conceptions?"

"That's downright mean. Leave a man a little self-conceit, can't you?"

Garnet spoke slowly. "I'll tell you what sometimes gets into my head. It doesn't come and go, bird fashion, but descends on me, solid and heavy, and—unpleasant. I get to thinking about life; and all my rules of conduct, external and internal, seem to lose their virtue. I think about how I go on from hour to hour, and year to year, trying to keep down faults and live up to my standard; and it appears as if all I try for didn't amount to much. After awhile I'll be old, and I'll die and be forgotten, and other men will be in my place doing as I did, to be forgotten as I was. I think at such times that I have no proof of anything better to come, or of any life at all here after; and I ask myself, what's the use of it all?"

"I never suspected that of you."

Garnet took up a small sounding lead lying on the gangway grating, and poised it in his hand. "Here it all is, birth, life, and death. I take it up—this lump of lead is a human soul galvanized by a foreign force into a sort of life, not belonging to it properly. Now I swing it—so-fashion—with all my might, and heave it as high as I can." He acted as he spoke. The lead rose in an arc, and fell overboard with a splash. "That's a man's slow laborious rise, and his quick easy fall by the irresistible gravity of death. He makes a little splash when we lose sight of him, but the water gets smooth again directly, and we don't know how deep he's gone, or what kind of bottom he rests on."

Hartley was astonished. "Why, Garnet, what made you heave the lead overboard?"

"Merely by way of illustration," replied Garnet coolly. "You are the prosaic one this time; the line was bent. Quartermaster, haul in the lead!" he ordered.

Hartley was a good deal taken aback for a minute: then he carried on the figure. "For what you know, that lead will in time be dissolved away by the water and rise in vapor, to be carried by the winds where it will be absorbed in its new forms, and live a better life in beautiful trees and flowers."

"That's too far away and uncertain. Too much *be* and not enough *do*. I'm thinking about a piece I saw in a paper and got by heart, years ago. It was signed 'Yonah.'"

"Spout it," said Hartley.

"Streams that sweep where thousands languish
 On the mountain, in the glen,
 Seaward bear each cry of anguish
 Uttered by the sons of men.
 Hence it is that ever Ocean
 Hath so deep, so sad a moan;
 Calm, or lashed in wild commotion,
 Therefore is its dirge-like tone.

Moaning for the dead and dying
 With its ever-voiceful waves:
 For the countless forms that, lying,
 Whiten in its coral caves.
 Earth the broken-hearted pillows,
 Rivers tell it to the sea—
 Shall not Ocean with its billows,
 Their eternal mourner be?"

"That's good," said Hartley.

"It was called a translation from the Greek."

"It sounds like the surf out yonder."

"Have you written anything lately?"

"One little thing. I thought of it awhile ago when you were speaking of your *cui bono*."

"Spout it."

"It is a translation from the French," said Hartley. He then repeated slowly the following lines:

"THE DOVES.

"On the slope of the hill, down where lie the tombs,
A beautiful palm-tree, like a green plume
Lifts up its head, where at dusk the doves come
To nestle and shelter themselves through the gloom.

But in the morn from the branches they fly,
Like a necklace's pearls loosed from threaded array :
We see them dispersing, white on the blue sky,
And settling again on some roof far away.

My soul is the tree, where like them, every even,
Fond foolish fancies, in multitudes white,
With rustling and trembling of wings fall from heaven—
But to vanish again with the morning's first light."

Garnet listened to him attentively, and when he had done, waited a minute before asking, "Do you want it criticised?"

"Yes," replied Hartley.

His friend was silent again for a minute. He spoke at last. "You've given me a tough nut to crack, and a rough one. It's not very inviting to look at. I fancy it isn't a very sweet one. I guess I'll not tackle it. You know the faults of the verse as well as I do. I don't believe that sort of thing will pay, anyhow, Hal?"

"I don't know. It is rough." He went on after awhile, "You speak of the painful question you are forced to ask yourself sometimes. I have just the same feeling; but it doesn't often come, and then it doesn't stay with me long."

"You constantly show me your weak side. You make a poorer showing than you deserve."

"How's that?" asked Hartley.

"You know you love change."

"Yes."

"I see you trying to keep that down before others, and sticking to things that have grown wearisome, but when we are alone you fly about, you constantly expose yourself."

Hartley answered good-humoredly, "That's a criticism in place of the one you wouldn't give on the poem. I acknowledge its justice. Perhaps the efforts you see me making may become a second nature."

Another pause, broken by Hartley. "I commenced to ask, awhile ago, about a strange kind of a feeling I sometimes have. It's as pleasant as yours is disagreeable, though it is an unearthly sort of pleasure. I feel it only when I have before me a great expanse of land or water, with nothing very striking to take my eye. The wind must be blowing just enough to plash the waves or rustle the grass gently, and the sun must be shining and I must be comfortable in body, with nothing to disturb me. When I have all this I sometimes fall into a kind of trance, which is the state I mean. My soul seems as if it were free to go away if it wished, as if it were hanging in the air. My body is forgotten, though I still see and hear. What I really see and hear has a sense of unreality with it. The rustling of the grass or plashing of the water seems far away, a delicious, dreamy sound. The most genuine things are those which do not exist, troops of angels winding in squadrons and columns so long that the other ends are lost in the vagueness of infinite distance; or myriads of white specks darting and dancing about the sky, white feather-dust mingling in whirling volutes in, confused tracks hopeless to trace. It may be a sensuous pleasure after all, or may be the delight of lulled senses, with the mind dreaming freely in the daytime; but it seems almost heavenly. I always dislike to have the trance broken, though there is an inexplicable satisfaction about a gradual awakening. I felt this the other day when I went to look over the key—while you were surveying the river."

"I have a touch of it once in a great while. It's what the French call *rêverie*," said Garnet. He stopped, and then went on: "We have talked a lot of nonsense to night. It's all too fanciful. I don't like it. I don't like these complicated ecstasies and agonies, for they don't amount to the

little end of nothing whittled down to a point. If I must have emotions, let them come in plain, simple fashion. I feel out o' sorts to night, Hal. Guess I'll take a blue pill to-morrow."

A blue pill might have done Garnet good for a time, inasmuch as it relieves the liver and brightens the mind ; perhaps it was the best medicine he could take, but in his case it could only palliate the symptoms of the true disease. He spoke again.

"See yonder."

"What ?"

"The midshipman of the fore-castle leaning on the fore-top-sail-sheet bitt. I'd bet he's asleep."

"Who is it ?"

"Mr. Godolphin. Poor young fellow ! It's hard on a growing boy to lose his rest."

"There's three bells. As I have to relieve you at twelve, I'd better not lose my rest. Good night, Will."

"Au reservoir."

After he had been gone awhile, Garnet, observing that Porp remained motionless, in the same position, walked forward to see him. Porp stood with his head bowed down on the bitt, as though it were the altar of the sweet slumber he adored ; while his regular audible breathings might have passed as a rapt address to the god. Garnet, instigated by the spirit of fun, first made sure he was asleep, and then lifted his cap from his head so gently as not to awaken him, and carried it away. He sent Burke to put it on the lockers in the steerage.

In a few minutes, the cool air striking on Porp's unprotected head, awoke him with a start.

He thought he had been hailed, and he answered aloud, "Aye, aye, sir." Then he went aft in confusion to tell Garnet he did not understand the order.

"I didn't hail, sir," said Garnet.

"Oh, I thought you—I thought I—"

"Where's your cap, Mr. Godolphin ?" asked Garnet.

"I don't know," replied Porp, feeling his head in a bewildered and helpless manner; "it dropped off, I guess."

"Better take care *you* don't drop off, sir. It's very strange for you to lose your cap without missing it. Go get it."

Porp went away, and had a great hunt on the fore-castle, of course unsuccessful. He had to go below to borrow another head covering. When he found his cap in the steerage next day, his amazement was big, and the mess was puzzled by his persistent story. They agreed together that Porp had come below asleep, and had got back on deck without awaking.

When Garnet's watch was over, Hartley came yawning up the ladder and relieved him with the natural unwillingness to keep awake at night, unless in company, that no quantity of watch-standing can turn into indifference.

Garnet passed the orders, and then said, as he started to go below, "If you'll look in the order book you'll see that you are going to enjoy a great pleasure at four."

"How so?" asked Hartley.

"We are to get under way then, and you'll have the satisfaction of turning in, as everybody else turns out."

"There is something in that," avowed Hartley as Garnet went below.

Little did Hartley think, as he paced steadily out the long four hours, engaged mainly in happy thoughts and keen longings for his beloved one, that she was near him, was even then passing in sight of the shore. And it was well for him that he did not, for the knowledge would have made him wretchedly anxious before the time.

CHAPTER XX.

WHEN the sloop left Santa Cruz she left behind her peculiar feelings of loss, sorrow, vexation, and relief, in the cottage of the Dewhursts.

Mr. Dewhurst was relieved to have his family again to himself, while he was vexed to remember that another man had gained a lien on his daughter, which, though of latest date, would have priority in the court of love. It annoyed him to think there could be no appeal, that of property to which he had such a good and old title he had been so quickly and irrecoverably disseized; and he had no relief in that philosophy which recalls its own pairing days and resignedly expects the children to follow nature.

"Well, dear," said his wife one day, after listening with her usual sweet patience to his grumbling; "we can't help it. It's only natural for the young birds to leave the old nest."

"I expect them to go to boarding-school," he replied, without much sequence; "and marry, too, some time; but to accept a husband so quickly—it takes my breath away."

"John, I won't hear a word against Mary, for that very thing shows how good she is. She hasn't much worldly wisdom, but I do hope and believe she has made a good choice."

He said no more at the time, but was evidently unsatisfied.

Mr. Dewhurst was a good man as the world goes, perhaps a little hard, but possessing many noble qualities. He had forgotten his own past, which, with jealousy of his daughter's love, made him selfish. Many another father has felt the same.

Mrs. Dewhurst was sad. It was a mother's sorrow to think that her only child would go away after awhile; that her one little lamb would look to a stranger for hap-

piness. Yet she felt, also, something of a mother's satisfaction in the prospect of her daughter's being "settled," and she had begun to feel for Hartley some confidence and esteem.

Isabel loved Mary, and looked forward with dread to separating from a cousin in whom she trusted and on whom she depended for companionship. There was a promise of loneliness which she knew how to fear, for she had been lonely much of her life. Her reserve never permitted her to show her whole heart, however, and Mary did not know her own dearness. The situation made Isabel remember with bitterness her dependent position, and led her to wonder if she should ever have a woman's joy in loving and in devoting herself to a good man.

Mary was the happiest of the four, for her heart was out on the seas in good keeping. With a serene complacency would she dwell upon the sayings and doings of the absent one. Even her tender regrets were all so mingled with sweet recollections that they seemed pleasures; and the other two women unselfishly hid the dark side of their minds, and let her be happy. Now she was sure she did love Henry; or rather, she thought of him so constantly, that no doubts ever came to trouble her.

A favorite resort of the girls was the summer-house in the garden, where they would pass hours of the day in reading, working, and chatting. Hartley was very apt to receive honorable mention during the sittings; in fact, he was always mentioned. How Mary enjoyed making her shy confidences! Isabel was usually good, encouraging her timid cousin, and avoiding the gentle ironies and sarcasms which were natural, to make her feel the more free. A part of their talk one pleasant afternoon when they were in the arbor, with books for an excuse, will show how Mary felt.

Mary put down her novel and gave a little yawn; she had not been reading with much attention for some time. Isabel heard the signal, closed her book, and waited.

"Bell, have you seen my sacque?"

"Yes, you've finished it at last."

"Just this morning. How do you like it?"

"It's very pretty. The braid pattern is a little too close to give the best effect, but it is very pretty and bears inspection," answered Isabel.

"I have been dreadfully idle with it. I am really ashamed to think how long I have been about it."

"You had a good reason, coz."

"What was it?" asked Mary.

"Most of the time you were working on it somebody was with you, and it's hard to talk and get along fast too."

"That's true, Bell. Why, I commenced it just after—Mr. Hartley came and I scarcely did anything on it all the while he was here."

"And trying faithfully all the time. That was working under difficulties. Don't call him Mr. Hartley, coz, the other sounds better."

"Do you really think so? I like the other best, myself, but somehow, it doesn't seem natural. I'll call him Henry to you, Bell, but you mustn't let any one know." She went on, holding up a lapel of the sacque to illustrate, "Just to think, the whole time he was here I put on the braid only from here to here."

"That gave you the right to upbraid him for making you neglect your work to listen to his sea-stories."

Mary looked at her cousin with a dove-like scornfulness. "Why Bell, I'd be ashamed! He didn't tell me any sea-stories," she added.

"What kind were they, coz?"

"None at all. But I told him one—one little fib about this very sacque. You know he left his horse here all night and I was making fun of him for it, for thinking so much about—about me, you know, he couldn't think of anything else. And he told me—he said that I knew the horse was there too, and my not telling father, so he might be sent back, showed—that—"

"That you were thinking so much about him, you couldn't think of anything else?"

"Yes, and I told him a fib. I said I was thinking about a pattern for this sacque. But, he was right, Bell."

"How did he take that?"

"Oh, that was too silly to tell. He said—it's too ridiculous!—he said I mustn't begin deceit so early in married life."

"Why, he was doing famously."

"Oh, you've no idea!"

"Of what, coz?"

"Nothing," replied Mary demurely.

"Haven't I? That's a pity."

After awhile Mary spoke again.

"Bell, I'm afraid father means to go away very soon."

"Why?"

"He has finished his business here already, and you know he can't endure idleness. I think he is getting tired and uneasy. It's too bad!"

"Why?"

"We have hardly seen the island yet, hardly settled down in our dear little house. And it's so pleasant here. Just to think of going back to New York, and the parties, and the tattle, and scandal, and everything! I hate it. I could stay here forever, Bell, it's all so pleasant and beautiful. And the garden—think of leaving it! and this dear old summer-house. I can't bear it!"

"I know, coz. Wasn't I with Aunt Susan when—"

"There, you may laugh at me, Bell, but I don't care. I have no one else to talk to. It was here—we sat here that afternoon, and I just love the place. It's all vines and flowers—you couldn't find another like it in New York."

"Well, I suppose I would, too."

"And then if we go away before he comes back—oh, Bell, I shall not have a chance to see him again for ever so long. It's too bad! He will seem like a perfect stranger."

"You would soon get over the strangeness. But Uncle

John will take us to the Havana, and I should think there would be a good chance of finding the Flying Fish there."

"No, Henry told me they were going to be nearly all the time on the south side of the island."

"Maybe they will get a prize, and I suppose if he asks he could have the command. He would be sure to take it to New York."

"But he told me they always make these middies do that. It would look as if he was running away from his place. I wouldn't like that."

"Well, little coz, there's many a chance of meeting."

"I wouldn't mind it so much—but I wasn't good to him."

Isabel seemed surprised. "Not good to him!"

"I wasn't kind to him—there, don't smile. I know what you think; but, Bell, I didn't do right by him."

"Why? how?"

"I—I didn't give him any satisfaction. I plagued him with my foolishness. At first I couldn't help—you understand, don't you?—he took everything for granted, and I—didn't say—no—but I felt doubtful all the time afterward, and I was so mean."

"I can't understand. How?"

"Why, I could see he was anxious, and I wouldn't—it seems like a wicked pleasure, but besides I couldn't—let him know how I felt. And I know he felt badly—instead of my sending him away happy."

"You did just right, and he thinks more of you to-day for it. You have plenty of time to make it up to him. Did he ever ask you to name the day?"

"The idea! No!"

"He will be sure to ask you the next time he sees you. And, Mary, take my advice, and don't put him off any longer than you can help."

"Oh, there's plenty of time."

"No. He is good, Mary, and he loves you, and there's no reason to keep him waiting for his happiness. You

will be happier, too. I am not advising you to act against uncle's and aunt's wishes, but they will let you do as you please."

"You are in more haste than I am, Bell."

"I am sure it is best. You had better think about it."

"Perhaps you are right," replied Mary, dubiously.

Mr. Dewhurst was getting impatient of his long inaction. Deprived of his newspaper, his familiar associations, and his business occupations, he fretted in idleness as active men always fret. His health seemed entirely restored, and to his mind, leisure, a perfect climate, and the beauties of nature were no reasons for lingering. Day by day his impatience grew, and his resolution became firmer to go at the first opportunity.

The opportunity came in the course of time, in the shape of an hermaphrodite brig, the *Sarah and Jane*, out of Baltimore, with a cargo of flour for Havana. A variety of untoward circumstances had forced her thus far to the east and into Santa Cruz. She was deeply laden, was a very bad sailer, and had poor accommodations for ladies; but Mr. Dewhurst would have gone in a still shabbier craft, rather than remain in the island which had become to him a prison. He made all arrangement necessary with Captain Dodson, the slow-spoken, slow-moving master; and when the *Sarah and Jane* left the harbor a week later she carried the whole family.

Mary left the place which was so endeared to her mind, with a sentimental sorrow none the less real because romantic. Not only was her affection for Hartley now evident to herself, but she loved the spots where he had been, and the arbor in which he had so decidedly taken possession of her was doubly dear. She went alone into the summer-house to bid it good-by, and she shed a few tears at leaving it. Perhaps it was partly because she was reminded of the happy past, the absent lover, and the doubtful future, that she cried.

The *Sarah and Jane* ran to the westward with favor-

able winds, making something over a hundred miles a day and meeting no incidents to break the monotony of the passage. The ladies spent their time much more agreeably than Mr. Dewhurst, whose chafing spirit suffered tortures. They had their sewing and a few books, and they often passed time in sitting on deck watching the mountains of Porto Rico and Hayti, by which the brig crept lazily. On the morning of the eighth day, they passed between Point Morant and Cape Tiburon, and that evening the wind shifted dead ahead. In the night the brig made a long tack toward Cuba, going about off Santiago at the time when Hartley was standing the middle watch unconscious of the nearness of his sleeping beauty. They were then fifteen weary days in beating up to the western end of the island. They went to bed one night wearied out, but congratulating themselves that in a few hours they would round Cape San Antonio, and that two days more at the farthest would place them in the Havana.

Their hopes were delusive. A gale of wind arose with disheartening quickness in the night, and when morning dawned the sea-sick party were told that they were many miles east of the last evening's position. The heavily laden brig was pitching very deeply, burying her bows in the sea at every plunge, and rising painfully, while walls of green water boarded her, ran aft in floods over the deck and battened hatches, and poured over the rail and through the scuppers in constant cascades. The concussion of heavy waves striking her, the continuous swash of the water, the howling of the wind, and the noise of the working timbers, kept the women in a state of doleful alarm; beside which, the whole party suffered from a second attack of sea-sickness brought on by the unusual and violent motion.

Isabel, more courageous than the other two, ventured to raise her head above the booby-hatch and take a survey of the scene. In a second her hair was soaked with salt spray, and was streaming and whipping at its full fine

length in the wind. She retreated quickly. Her account of the commotion of sea and sky was not reassuring to her aunt and cousin.

Mr. Dewhurst took to his bunk, and stuck there the gale through with a sullen, uncomplaining stoicism.

The strength of the wind increased to such a point that Captain Dodson got in all sail but the balance-reefed mainsail, and with vast philosophy let his brig lay to and drift. He spent most of the time below in the cuddy-hole of a cabin, stifling the sick ladies with the fumes of bad tobacco, and telling tales of shipwreck to enliven them.

Four long days and nights the Sarah and Jane plunged and wallowed, pitched and rolled, stood first on one end and then on the other, and drifted rapidly all the while. Then the gale left her as quickly as it had arisen. In excellent time, too, for land was in sight on three sides. They had been blown back on their course the entire length of Cuba, and were in the bay of Gonaives on the west side of Hayti.

"La, suz!" said Dodson, looking around at the land, "I never see the likes. I expect we'd better git a little sail on her to steady her a bit." The sea was running very high still, the waves almost glassy in their smoothness; and, with no canvas out to catch the small breeze, the brig was rolling fearfully. The imperturbable Dodson, his equanimity in no wise disturbed by lost time or past dangers, lighted his pipe, deliberately made sail, and leisurely repaired the damages of the storm. He headed the Sarah and Jane to the west again, and the wind steadying in the north, made very fair progress on the old course.

But more troubles were in waiting. Twenty-four hours brought the brig close to that eastern portion of the south coast which resembles the sole of a misshapen foot. Like Hiram Doolittle, Dodson shaved the points too close. In broad daylight, a handsome top-sail schooner, with long spars, ran out of a creek a mile or two ahead and stood down wing and wing to intercept the Sarah and Jane.

This pretty craft was our old acquaintance La Hembrilla.

Dodson called Mr. Dewhurst on deck and pointed out the schooner. "Purty boat, ain't she?" he asked that gentleman between two puffs.

"Yes," replied he; "but she doesn't look like a merchantman. Is she a man-of-war?"

"I suspicion she ain't no man o' peace," replied Dodson, with some gloom.

"What do you mean, man?"

"I expect that is a pirit."

Mr. Dewhurst looked at Dodson incredulously. "Why are we going to meet her then?" he asked.

"I'm willin' to avide a meetin, but there ain't no chance. He sails two knots to our one."

"We must run back to Santiago."

"No, too fur past," answered Dodson.

"Well, we can fight, anyhow."

"Tain't no use, sir, tain't no use—he's got thirty men on his deck, and a gun, too; you can see for yourself with the glass. And we hain't got but twelve."

"Captain Dodson," said Mr. Dewhurst, "I insist on your trying to escape. You have your cargo to account for to your owners, and I promise you I will hold you strictly responsible for any harm that comes to my family."

Dodson was philosophic, as usual. In his wisdom he thought that the pirates would be unlikely to do more than stop his brig; for she was old, ugly, and slow, and would be useless to them. He thought they might take a part of his flour, but was willing to pay a moderate toll for the sake of peace. He felt sure that they would detain his passengers, but that would be an endurable loss, especially since their passage was paid. Altogether, he doubtless did the best he could for himself. "I tell you tain't no use to run," said he. "We're most in shootin' distance, and I don't want to be no target for a big gun. Runnin' away 'll only

errytate 'em, and they don't never hurt nobody that gives up peaceable. Maybe they ain't pirits."

"I shall hold you accountable, sir; you stand to lose your certificate," said Mr. Dewhurst in his excitement. "Good Lord!" he exclaimed, in a piteous voice, "what will become of my poor wife and daughter!"

"I reckon," remarked Dodson, with reassuring calmness, "it'll cost you as much as a thousand dollars apiece, for you to get 'em to the Havana." He explained to Mr. Dewhurst that ransom was a certainty, but warned him that he had heard in Santa Cruz that the passengers were rich, and that if the pirates learned so, the ransom would be proportionately large.

Mr. Dewhurst was greatly relieved. As his fears for his womenkind departed, his presence of mind and ability to think returned. He went down into the cabin and explained the awkward situation to the trio there, but in such a manner as not to alarm them. In this he was assisted by the idea of ransom on which he dwelt. He explained how necessary it was to make an unpretending appearance, and then he collected all the valuable jewels the ladies had with them, and tied them up in a box, into which he placed weight enough to insure speedy sinking. It was his intention to drop it quietly overboard, as soon as he was positive the strange vessel was a pirate. Fortunately he had but a small sum on hand in ready cash, and the ladies had with them only simple and moderate wardrobes. They yielded up their treasures sadly, with the doubtful comfort that it was better to throw them away than to be robbed. Mr. Dewhurst left a few ornaments to avoid a suspicious plainness, and returned to the deck with the box under his coat.

La Hembrilla was about half a mile away, with her head-sheets hauled over, waiting the arrival of the Sarah and Jane. That gallant craft ran down near her, and, as if she were keeping an appointment, or knew that there was business on hand that would not bear delay, she hove

to without even waiting to be hailed. Directly a four-oared boat left the pirate, and pulling rapidly across the intervening hundred yards of water, ran along side the brig. The burly first mate of La Hembrilla sat in the stern-sheets steering, and his four men were well armed. As soon as he reached the side of the Sarah and Jane, Arrowson sprang on her deck, followed by his men. He drew a pistol, glanced at the forecastle, where the brig's crew stood like so many frightened sheep, and ordering his men to stay in the waist, marched aft. "I take possession o' this 'ere brig," he cried. Nobody answered a word for a minute, when Mr. Dewhurst asked, "By what authority?" Arrowson answered with a triumphant burst of profanity, that it was because he pleased. "You're the cap'n, are you?" he asked insolently. "No," answered Mr. Dewhurst, "there he is."

Arrowson turned to the unfortunate Dodson, who was speechlessly smoking his pipe, and poured upon him the vials of contemptuous invective. He cursed him for a coward and a sneak; told him that he had a mind to tie a shot to his neck and heave him overboard; reviled him scornfully for being too chicken-hearted even to run; and covered him with nasty abuse. "And you're the *cap'n*!" he exclaimed in sneering scorn. Dodson, who had not yet uttered a word, made no reply but to blow out his smoke. Arrowson went on, "A 'ell of a cap'n, hain't you?" This being an inconvenient question to answer, Dodson was still mute. "Speak! ye dumb stock-fish!" roared Arrowson in a rage, and he knocked the pipe out of Dodson's mouth.

"You oughtn't to do that-away," said Dodson in meek remonstrance, looking regretfully at the scattered pipe sherds.

"Shut your mouth, you — or I'll shut it for you with a swab!" cursed the mate, who went on to repeat his former blessing, if possible, intensified.

While the attention of every body was drawn to this scene, Mr. Dewhurst managed to drop his little box over-

board unnoticed, and had the satisfaction of seeing its white descending spiral grow fainter and fainter, until the blue water hid it from sight.

CHAPTER XXI.

WHEN Arrowson had finished his abuse, he proceeded to business. "Who are you?" he asked Mr. Dewhurst.

"John Dewhurst. I'm a passenger in this vessel."

"Hany more passengers?"

"My wife, and daughter, and niece, are all."

"Say, you cap'n, get hevery body hon deck this minute. Cover the 'atches, boys, when they're hall hup, and let none go below."

Mr. Dewhurst called his family, who at once came up, frightened and anxious to be with him.

"D—d pretty gals," said Arrowson.

Mr. Dewhurst tried to restrain his rage at these words and the chuckle that followed them, by taking them as a part of the insolence he must expect, and to which he could only submit.

"Where did you come from?" asked Arrowson.

"New York."

"What are you down 'ere for?"

"For my health, and on business for the house in New York," replied Mr. Dewhurst.

"And hit aint so 'elthy as you hexpected, hey? That 'ouse in New York will 'ave to stay hempty awhile now," said Arrowson, laughing at his own wit. "Come 'ere, you cap'n feller! What's your name?"

"Richard Dodson," he answered, approaching.

"Dods, hey! Ought to be Clods."

"Dodson," corrected the captain.

"D—n the difference! What are you loaded with?"

Dodson told him, and after asking other questions, Arrowson hailed the schooner for the captain to come on board. A second boat, manned like the first, soon came, bringing Hackett.

He was a tall man, stooping and lean, but strongly built, with sunken but bright gray eyes, thin straggling sandy hair and beard, a hooked nose, and the parchment and brick-dust complexion common among seamen. He stepped on the deck quietly, looked about him and aloft with a quick sailorly glance, and joined his lieutenant. A low conversation ensued. When it was ended, he renewed the order to keep everybody on deck, and after getting all the keys in the ship he went below, having hardly looked at the prisoners. He took six of his own men and Captain Dodson, and was gone for an hour, during which time, seemingly very long, the Dewhursts remained standing aft together, filled with forebodings.

The search ended, the party returned on deck, and Hackett approached Mr. Dewhurst. "Mr. Dewhurst," said he, in a respectful tone, "I'm agoin' to put you and your folks aboard my schooner. You can take some o' your men and get your trunks into the boats."

The ladies were greatly relieved by the contrast between Hackett's manner and that of his mate, and Mr. Dewhurst was moved to reply with some courtesy, "I am obliged to you, sir."

In a few minutes the party stood on the deck of *La Hembrilla*, and the boats quickly brought over Dodson and a part of his crew. Twelve of the pirate's men were put on board the brig, with one of the best seamen in charge; and the two vessels filled away and stood to the southward in company.

The change was so great, and had been so quickly made, that not till then could the translated travellers realize what had happened. For half an hour they stood gazing on the motley crowd of men from all nations, who

alternately lounged idly about and sprung to carry out the orders of their officers; at the beautiful condition in which the vessel was kept, her clean decks, bright brass work, shining twelve-pounder gun amidship, graceful taper spars, and great white sails. Not that *La Hembrilla* had much sail set at the time. She had been obliged to take in everything but jib and mainsail, in order not to run away from the brig, who carried all her studding sails.

When Hackett returned from the *Sarah* and *Jane*, he at once set the lowly freebooter who acted as his cook, at work preparing the cabin to receive the ladies. In half an hour it was ready. Hackett had left his prisoners alone as before, but now told them something of his disposition and intentions. "I guess you might jest as well know what I am goin' to do with you," said he to the party, which included Dodson and his mate. "I'll land you on *Cuby* in three or four days, and keep you there awhile. You'll have a chance to send over to *Matanzas*, or anywheres else you want to, to raise a little s'thin to pay for your board. Mr. Dewhurst, you and the other two will have to take the spare bunks in the mate's cabin. I've fixed up my own cabin to make it as convenient for the ladies as I could. We don't often have such good company, and don't keep ready for it, so you must allow for us if everythin' isn't quite comfortable. Now, ladies, if you'll just step below, I'll show you your quarters."

Hackett's tone was one of hospitality, exactly such as the owner of a yacht might use toward unexpected but welcome guests. Mrs. Dewhurst looked appealingly to her husband. "Certainly, my dear," he said, answering her unspoken question. "Can I see my husband again to-day, sir?" she asked Hackett.

"Of course you can, if you want to, ma'am," replied he. "You and the other ladies make yourselves free to go and come, just as you please. Come down with us, Mr. Dewhurst." Thereupon Mrs. Dewhurst, gathering in her skirts and followed by the girls, went down the ladder after Hackett and her husband.

The cabin, which had the size of a room fifteen feet square, though differing much in dimensions and shape, was a sufficiently comfortable place. The ceiling was only six feet from the deck, which gave a sense of contraction, but in other respects it was all very pleasant. The shape of the room was irregular, being several feet narrower at the end toward the stern, because the size of the vessel made it needful to use all her space. On either side a wide settee ran the whole length of the cabin, with a double covering of three pairs of broad cushions in snowy linen cases. There was no sign of war or violence in displayed weapons, but all looked peaceable and well-meaning.

"Here's our beds," said Hackett, with a slight pride perceivable in his voice "and here's how to make 'em." He pulled out the panel in the front of the settee, showing that it swung out on hinges at the top, and that as it was brought to a horizontal position, jointed legs unfolded themselves, dropping by their own weight, and sustained it with their lower ends resting on the deck. This formed a shelf as high and as wide as the top of the settee. He slid out the upper of one of the pairs of cushions upon this shelf, to whose edge it exactly reached ; the two cushions, side and side, thus making a nice couch.

"There !" said Hackett, "that's an idear o' my own, ladies. That's a good enough bed for any body at sea. There isn't anythin' under the settees—you can just stow your dirty clothes away under there, and when we go ashore I guess we can get some of the women to do your washin'."

Isabel, who had entirely recovered herself, was much amused. "It's very nice, sir," said she to Hackett, with a sweet smile.

"Wa-al—neow — ya-as," replied the gentle pirate, pleased by the approbation. "You see these here lockers." He unbuttoned a door of one of the deep closets he called lockers, and showed them its contents. "There's a plenty o' bed clothes in here, pillers, sheets, everythin' you want.

I reckon you'd better make your beds yourselves : my man ain't used to doin' for ladies. 'Tain't worth your while to take your clothes out o' your trunks, cause you'll have to pack up again so soon, but you can use the lockers if you're a mind to."

By this time the ladies had become somewhat used to their new abode, and the disengaged manners of their captor made them feel easy. The cabin had a home-like and attractive look which also influenced them. The sides and ceiling and floor were painted white, tending to make the place light, though the only windows were massive glass bull's eyes set in the deck above. The trunks sat against the bulkheads with the keys in the locks, and each lady, as she caught sight of them, could not restrain a burning curiosity to know how many of her things were gone. There was a long gilt mirror against the partition, surely a token of civilization and a cause for satisfaction.

"I forgot to tell you," continued Hackett. "There's a little wash-room at the foot o' the ladder—that'n on the star-board side—on your left hand, there. I'd a little rather you wouldn't go into the other one, for it's my signal room. There's a plenty o' towels—but I ain't got anythin' better'n a tin basin," he added regretfully. "Well—that's all—no, here's this screen."

He showed them a handsome crimson curtain, hanging by brass rings on a rod which ran fore and aft through the middle of the cabin near the ceiling. It was now slid against the mirror. "You see, ladies, I just had this put up sence you come aboard, so you can have it private when you want to. All you got to do is to slide it along—so. Here's your side, to larboard, and nobody 'll trouble you when you've got the screen drawn to."

"Oh, its quite nice," murmured Mrs. Dewhurst.

"It's nicer than the Sarah and Jane," said Mary timidly.

Isabel laughed out frankly and'gayly. "It isn't fair to compare the Sarah and Jane with your pretty vessel, Captain—"

"Hackett, ma'am," supplied he blandly.

"Captain Hackett. We shall be a great deal more comfortable here, and we are ever so much obliged to you for taking so much trouble."

"I don't count the trouble, ma'am. I know good company when I see it, and I like it as well as any man. I don't often get it, but I'm willin' to lay myself out when I do. I took a ship once off the north coast, and there was a Spanish lady aboard. She was ashore with us the best part of a month before she heard from her friends in Matanzas; and though I done everythin' I could to make her comfortable in my own house, she wouldn't hardly speak to me."

The latter part of the ingenuous statement was made in a grieved tone, as though he thought the Spanish lady had not treated him quite right. "Now, ladies," he went on, "make yourselves to hum. If I can do anythin' for you be sure to let me know. You can go anywheres you want to, but I guess you better keep aft, for my men are pretty rough. I'm sorry I can't accommodate you down here too, Mr. Dewhurst, but you see there ain't no room. Call in, and stay as long's you're a mind whenever you want to see the ladies."

"I am exceedingly obliged to you, sir," replied Mr. Dewhurst.

"Captain Hackett," put in Isabel vivaciously, "we shall not find another way of travelling half as nice as your vessel. As long as we are with you, you had better take us on to the Havana."

"Much obliged, ma'am. I would like it myself but—"

"It would save us a good deal of time, and if it's out of your way, I'm sure Mr. Dewhurst would be willing to pay for our passage."

"Yes, if I could," said he.

"I guess your pa and me had better talk it over. You must excuse me now, for I've got to go on deck and take a departure." So saying, he left them.

Mr. Dewhurst's varying expression of countenance during the conversation was pregnant with feeling, and would have amused a looker-on. Surprise at the peculiar situation, gladness that matters were no worse, vexation at the attentions a rascal of a pirate was showing to his woman-kind, amusement at the said pirate's ingenuous pride in his nice properties and at his lack of conventionality, suspicion at having to leave the ladies at night, and gratitude for the unexpected comforts he saw bestowed—all ran through his mind and over his unguarded face. When they were left alone he spoke, commencing dubiously, then getting angry, then laughing in spite of himself. "I suppose we had better make the best of it. It might be worse—but I'll have a pretty penny to pay before we are free. The scoundrel! what does he mean by talking to you in that free and easy manner?—talking about your beds and your soiled clothes." His face relaxed and he had to laugh. Isabel joined him heartily; while a faint smile appeared even on the woful countenance of Mrs. Dewhurst.

Presently a decently dressed and respectful negro man came in, made the cabin tidy, and set the table with dexterity. At supper, which followed soon, he waited on them. Captain Hackett invited Mr. Dewhurst to mess with them; and he sat down at the foot of the table—there was no head but the bulkhead—and did the honors in very good style. Mrs. Dewhurst was so much impressed by his manner that she expected him to say grace, remembering only in time to arrest half-way in much confusion the pious forward inclination of her head. The circumstance did not escape Isabel who, in nautical parlance, had her weather eye open; and she had hard work not to laugh out. In after days she teased Aunt Susan a good deal about it.

Hackett wished to make his guests feel easy, and he was quite chatty—filling in, himself, when necessary, the parts of the talk belonging to the others. Among the rest he told them, taking advantage of his servant's absence, how that servant had misbehaved. "You see, ladies, Cato belonged

to a man down in Maryland, that learnt him to cook, and black boots, and read, and one thing or 'nother—leastways he had him learnt, for I reckon he was too big a bug to spend his time learnin' niggers—and he used him for a body-servant. He had occasion to go to New York, and like a darn fool—beg your pardon, ladies—he took Cato along with him. Wa-a-a-l, Cato deserted. My mate, he come acrost him and shipped him, but I wish he had'nt. Cato's *pious*”—he emphasized the word with a slight sneer—“and then he's slow, and my mate's quick, so he had a pretty considerable hard time till I took him. He run off a fortnight or so ago, and somehow joined another party, and got captured by a man-o'-war—there's a States' sloop cruisin' off here—I've seen her once or twice myself”—a faint expression of satisfaction was visible to Isabel's watchful eyes, though the hard lines remained unchanged and he did not pause—“and one day when this party I was speakin of was towin' a brig they had took in shore, the sloop come along and sent some boats in and got her back. The men got off in their boats—all but Cato—he wa'n't quick enough, and he got took. Wa-a-a-l, they went off and anchored so nigh shore, that Cato slipped overboard with his irons on, and swum ashore, and come back to me. He's done pretty well sence I got him in here.” He talked away on indifferent subjects until the meal was done; and then, repeating his offers of assistance, went on deck.

The little family passed a dismal evening together, none of them venturing into the open air. Mr. Dewhurst left them reluctantly at a late hour, going to the mate's cabin, to his own bunk, which he had already examined and disliked; and the ladies made up their beds on the settees and turned in all standing. It is a peculiarity of ladies at sea to do this on all occasions which to their minds seem doubtful. If they must die, they desire the assistance of a decorous costume. These ladies had no disturbance, further than that caused by Mr. Benjamin

Markley, who got too drunk, and persisted in singing "God save the king," for several hours, in a voice more powerful than sweet, and distinctly audible through the bulkhead. In fact, all that was spoken in the mate's room was more or less plainly heard in the cabin. After he ceased his disconnected warblings, they found it hard restrain their excited imaginations, eager for wildest vagaries; and sleep was not immediately possible.

Next morning Mr. Dewhurst was on deck bright and early. He found the schooner still heading to the southward, in which direction she was accompanied by the Sarah and Jane. The crew of the pirate were as busy as a man-of-war's men would have been, and at the same things which commonly occupied the lawful followers of the sea at the same hour. They were scrubbing the paint-work, washing the decks, polishing the brass-work, and bathing their bodies in the cool sea-water. The mate, Arrowson, had charge of the work, and he was so gruff and uncivil that Mr. Dewhurst thought best to go below again and keep out of the way. He was assisted in reaching that opinion by one of the men dashing a bucket of water over his legs, as if by accident. Hackett came up from the cabin as he started, however, and he decided to remain, in hope of getting an understanding. Hackett was not averse to conversation, but with all his apparent freedom Mr. Dewhurst found in him a very lawyer-like reticence on any point he did not care to discuss. To pin him down to any positive statement about the time in which they could hope to be free was useless. He slipped away so easily, so carelessly, in fact, as to arouse the gentleman's choler at his disrespectful evasions. On one point he was explicit enough—no money would induce him to land the party anywhere on the north coast. Mr. Dewhurst thought best not to ask any questions yet about the amount of ransom that would be required, confining his exertions to getting some notion of when he should be free, and the points connected therewith. He found out nothing positive; and

directly Hackett, taking the offensive, asked a few simple questions, the answers to which gave him a good inferential idea of the wealth and social position of his prisoner. Where was his dwelling-house? Where was his office? What was the business of his firm? Did he know such a man? Then he took Mr. Dewhurst's unwilling hand in his, and shook it as one might salute a long absent friend, chuckling discordantly while he shook. "I know good company when I see it, sir. I am glad I met you, I am now, I vow," said he; and then he coolly walked away to another part of the vessel. Mr. Dewhurst was mightily chagrined at having been so easily outgeneralled, and he growled at himself for being in too much of a hurry.

CHAPTER XXII.

AT breakfast he was mum, but the girls, feeling the influence of Hackett's homely, confidence-inspiring talk, fell to chatting. In the course of it, Mary laughingly declared that she would not have missed making Captain Hackett's acquaintance for anything. He, much pleased, drew from her, as reasons why, that she thought gallant corsairs had not had justice done them by the writers. She went on, supported and assisted by Isabel, to make a sombre copy of the pirate of the novel, with his black flag and his coffin-like vessel, his inevitable plank to be walked, and his love for all things gory. "Du tell!" inserted Hackett, who was listening very much interested. Then she gayly put in contrast the comfort, order, and beauty of all about La Hembrilla, and she spoke of their own reception and treatment in grateful terms. Hackett insisted that he knew good company when he saw it, and was only sorry he could do no more for them.

The fact was that the two girls had made their plans. Mary had arisen very early after her almost sleepless night,

and in spite of the narrowness of the settees has snuggled down by Isabel. The two whispered together until their little plot was all prepared. That was to unite their forces on Hackett, to see if it were possible to wheedle him into an early release, and at any rate to find out his intentions. They did not know of Mr. Dewhurst's attempt and failure; and he, divining that they had an object, got up and left the table to give them free play at the captor.

Isabel took immediate advantage to ask whether "you and Uncle John came to any understanding?"

"Wa-a-a-l—no!" replied Hackett. "Can't say as we did."

"But, captain," said Mary, "you told us last night you'd talk it over with father."

"Yes 'um."

"You said you had better see uncle about taking us around to the Havana," said Isabel.

"Yes 'um."

"Didn't you speak to him?"

"Wa-a-a-l, yes. We had some talk about it."

"Now, captain, that's too provoking, we are dying of curiosity, and here you won't tell us a thing," exclaimed Mary.

"Don't know as I've got anythin' to tell, ma'am. It would be impossible for me to run into the Havana, and that's what I said to your pa."

"Impossible! Oh, captain, I thought from all I'd heard that you could go anywhere you pleased."

Hackett answered, rather flattered, "That's a little too strong."

"Now, captain, I know you could land us somewhere near the Havana if you would," said Mary.

He gave no answer.

"We have been so long trying to get there. Just to think it is twenty-eight days since we left Santa Cruz."

"Sho! that's too bad, I do declare."

"And we thought we would have been in the Havana

long ago, and nearly ready to start home. We have been all this time sailing about for nothing, and we were so sick in that dreadful gale—”

“Ladies hadn’t oughter come to sea.”

“Yes, we have been delayed till we feel almost as though we should never see home any more.”

“Make your mind easy about that, anyhow.”

“Captain, you really ought to take us around Cape San Antonio. I declare that cape is like the Cape of Good Hope was to the first mariners that tried to go round it,” said Mary.

“How was that, ma’am?”

“It was so stormy, or else they were afraid—or something—anyhow they could never get around it; so they called it the Cape of Storms, and believed there was a great spirit of the ocean that guarded the way and drove back their ships.”

“Them Portygees are poor sailors, anyhow. I ricollect—”

“Cape San Antonio has been our cape of storms, and you have been the bad spirit, don’t you see, captain?”

“But you must be a good spirit now, captain, and help us around. Come now, captain, promise me to do that for us, won’t you, please?” Mary smiled a sweet begging smile and Isabel tried to do the same.

The keen, hard-headed Yankee was taken on his weakest side by the two amateur Delilahs. He hesitated an instant. They saw it and urged him, gently but hard. His uncertainty was soon over, and he rallied. “No, Miss Mary, I couldn’t do it nohow. I’m sorry to have to say no to *you*.”

Mary pouted with an exquisite affectation of ill-humor. Truly all women are born actresses. “Oh, me!” she sighed forlorn and pettish; “I’d like to know what will become of us!” It was not the least like a question, that exclamation.

“I can tell you that I reckon, provided nothin’ don’t come up to alter things. You’ll go ashore in about two

days from now in a little harbor I know, and you'll get tol'able good quarters in a house there, and you can send a man that knows the roads over to Havana or anywhere your pa wants, to raise the money to pay for your board bill and travellin' expenses. If your pa has got friends over there, and can raise the money quick, you won't be very long gettin' away. You must excuse me—I've got to go on deck."

During this conversation Mrs. Dewhurst had made sundry and divers efforts to catch the attention, first of one girl, then of the other. She thought that it would sound very badly when they returned home and she was telling the story of their capture to their social friends, to be obliged to relate that her niece and her daughter so far forgot themselves as to hold familiar and fearless converse with the leader of the band. She imagined the whites of Mrs. Grundy's eyes. But the girls took very good pains not to notice the efforts they saw her making. She gave them a gentle lecture which they bore with an abstracted good-humor.

Hackett told them no more, and would not say anything further to Mr. Dewhurst. The first part of his statement proved correct, except that it was little more than a day till they sighted the land again. Bending the course gradually to the west and then to the north, the schooner made a great curved track which took her back to the island, though at a point much west of where she had left it. Hackett's idea in running to the southward was to avoid the risk of meeting vessels in the customary highway. He wished to take the brig into the Hole, and he knew she was too slow a sailer to risk her falling in with a man-of-war.

Nothing beyond the sense of captivity annoyed the ladies, except that they were forced by the smallness of the vessel and proximity of the crew to hear an occasional oath or vulgarity. Happily they did not understand much of what they heard in English, and in other languages profanity sounded as nice to them as anything else. The two

mates were the most troublesome ; for their conversation, which they took no heed to restrain, penetrated easily through the bulkhead that separated the steerage from the cabin.

Mary and Mrs. Dewhurst had gone on deck to get the air, and Isabel was preparing to join them, when she heard the two ruffians go down the ladder into their apartment. Their talk was audible by snatches, to which she was forced to listen for a minute while she was changing her shoes. "Where's the bottle, Ben?" "Mum, mum, mum." "Down with the Dutch!" "Aye." "Pretty gals." "Big one's a tearer." "Give me the little one!" "Give me the blackeyes!" "Blue's my color."—She beat a hasty retreat, uneasy to know that Arrowson had been looking at Mary, and that she herself had obtained favor with Markley.

When the high land of Cuba was sighted, the prisoners were sent below and guards stationed over the hatches to keep them there. This had long been a precaution of Hackett's. He did not wish to have the exact position of his refuge generally known, as it would have been had he permitted his prisoners to note the landmarks.

The schooner, still accompanied by the brig, stood in toward the outer point of the Fisherman's Key, this being the place at which it was customary for La Hembrilla to make the land. A strong wind was now blowing from the east and south. Leaving the key a few miles to the right the two vessels stood over toward the Hole.

A surprise awaited Hackett almost equal to that he had given the unlucky Dodson. When about four miles east of the Cobre his lookout aloft reported a sail as having just run out of the river. In a minute more he hailed that it was a large square-rigged vessel looking like a man-of-war, then that she was standing for them. Hackett was sure at a glance of what his glass made certain, that it was the Flying Fish. "Darn the luck!" said he, "that darned sloop is always getting in the way!" He hauled the schooner by the wind, and started back for the brig, which

had been wallowing along after him half a mile astern; and he called Arrowson.

"You take a boat and go aboard the brig, Jeames, and take charge of her. Work back along the shore, and if he chases you, beach her, and take the men to the quarters. But he won't trouble you, I reckon."

"Why not me as well as you?" asked Arrowson.

"He'll be after the schooner. He knows our prisoners are aboard here, of course, and besides he has made up his mind to sink the little gal, Jeames. I guess he thinks he'll overhaul us in this wind and sea."

"What are you going to do?" queried Arrowson, grumblingly.

"Run down to Isla Bella, and dodge him to-night. I'll be back to-morrow and he'll go on around, which will give us time enough. I want you to take the brig in the Hole, and get out as much flour as you can on the beach—it'll come in handy for the men. Cut her masts away and fetch her out by eight o'clock to-morrow morning, and have her ready to warp in the channel and sink when I run in."

Arrowson growled. "The men aboard can do all that as well without me as with me. I don't want to leave the schooner."

"Jeames Arrowson," said Hackett firmly, "let's have no words. If you don't like goin' first mate with me, suit yourself elsewhere; but while you stay you've got to obey orders." Arrowson yielded sullenly, and turned away to prepare the boat. The brig hove to for him, and he was soon on board, engaged in trimming her on a wind, with her head in shore.

As soon as the schooner had picked up her boat, she filled away and stood off a little free to the southward and westward, making more sail and dashing through the roughening sea in fine style. As Hackett had predicted, the sloop-of-war stood after him at once, neglecting the brig.

It was a fine sight. *La Hembrilla* had a start of about two miles and a half, a distance which her captain seemed willing to preserve. He set every sail he dared, and the lithesome vessel seemed to feel her danger. She lay far over on her side, the green water occasionally seething and bubbling up over her lee-rail, the waves striking her weather-bow to be thrown upward and break into constantly succeeding showers of diamond spray. The spray glittered in the sunlight and made evanescent little rainbows on board. The long masts strained under their press of sail, bending like whip-sticks, and the wind sung in the weather shrouds with a sharp twanging sound which showed how tensely they were stretched.

The breeze increased. The motion of the beautiful schooner, lately so easy when gliding along free under small sail and in less wind, now became a succession of violent jerks and pitches. Sometimes she would dart ahead like a bird, and then her way would be suddenly and entirely checked.

It was not so on board the *Flying Fish*. Every spar and rope had been put in its place with the expectation that storms would test it; and for her the wind now blowing was only a capfull. Her greater size gave her the advantage of being able to meet, without feeling, waves that seriously diminished the schooner's head-way when they struck her; and seas, up which the smaller vessel had laboriously to mount, and down which she must descend, hardly threw the other out of the horizontal. She, too, carried all the canvas she could bear. Dashing onward swiftly, while she careened to the blast with every bellied sail firmly full, rigid as iron, she seemed a mighty bird of prey in relentless pursuit of some beautiful small fowl.

Hackett saw that he was losing distance and felt some alarm; but he continued to carry on, hoping to keep ahead till night, when he was sure his resources would not fail. He closely watched the continued approach of the *Flying Fish*, and from time to time calculated whether he could

reach Isla Bella before the sloop would reach him. In three hours he was satisfied. He would probably be exposed to the fire of her battery for a little while before dark ; but at such a distance and in so rough a sea, he was not anxious. He resolved to show his cabin passengers a pretty little trick, and sent for them to come on deck.

Mr. Dewhurst, followed by the three ladies, soon appeared, all of them staggering, and clinging to rail and rigging in order to keep their footing on the steep and violently moving deck. They were glad to get a breath of fresh air, and were curious to know the cause of the sudden and quick movements they had felt below.

Mr. Dewhurst looked out on the waste of waters, and up at the immense spread of canvas ; and with an amazed expression, he exclaimed : " Why, captain, I thought you were going to land us ! We are sailing right toward the sun ! Where are we ? What is the matter ? "

For reply Hackett pointed to the sloop, now only about two miles away and a little on the weather quarter. Mr. Dewhurst looked astonished, and so his voice sounded, " The Flying Fish ! " he exclaimed, in a half-incredulous manner.

Mrs. Dewhurst was lost in apprehensive wonder. " What is it ? " she asked.

" It is the Flying Fish," answered Isabel, in a tone of relief and hope.

But Mary's quick glad cry, " Oh, the Fish ! the Fish ! " was a note of pure joy that nettled Hackett.

" You're mighty glad to see her, ain't you ? " said he rather roughly. Of course he did not guess at the real reason of her delight, the sudden thrill at finding her lover near at such a time, and the pride which flashed into her mind, as she immediately took it for granted that Hartley would straightway rescue them, *vi et armis*, from their enemies' hands.

She turned to him frankly. " Yes, sir, I am. You cant blame me for feeling so."

“Wa-a-a-l—no,” admitted Hackett, mollified by her bright appealing. “All’s fair in love and war, I’ve heard.”

It was a bow shot at a venture, but the arrow struck the mark. Mary blushed even there, and so vividly, or, at least, so hotly, that she felt thankful to the strong cool breeze that excused the freshness of her color. “Come, Bell!” said she, “let’s make a signal to that slow old thing to come along.” She stood by the taffrail and waved her handkerchief, and tried to make Isabel wave hers, to help her keep a good face on it.

“My daughter!” said Mr. Dewhurst, sternly, “Don’t do that.”

“Pshaw!” said Hackett with a sneer. “Let her alone. It don’t do no hurt.”

Mary obediently put away the offending handkerchief, but asked her father why he had given the command.

“Because I do not like to see you urge that vessel on,” replied Mr. Dewhurst. “When she is near enough she will fire at us, and you may be killed.” Mary turned pale at that, but quickly remembered, and felt convinced in her own mind, that Henry Hartley would arrange it in some manner, so she would have no danger to run.

“Oh, me! why did I ever consent to come to sea?” cried Mrs. Dewhurst, distressedly. “We shall all be killed!”

“Wa-a-a-l—no,” drawled Hackett. “Your pa is right, Miss Mary; but I guess I can stow you ladies under the cabin floor, in the run, if he opens on us. You’ll be safe enough there.” He resumed, after another critical squint through the glass, “I don’t guess you’ll get aboard that cruiser very soon, Miss Mary, nor you neither, Miss Bell. I’ll just show you why. Look here at the chart. Here’s Isla Bella, and here’s about where we are now. About eight o’clock we’ll be abreast the island. Wa-a-a-l—I’m goin’ to run close to it to windward—there’s deep water right in shore—and you see this little bay-like, here, just a sort o’ little cove—wa-a-a-l, I calc’late we’ll get nigh it

with the sloop about three-quarters of a mile astern, and what moon there is low down on the other side, so we'll be in the shade o' the land. I'll run to here"—indicating the spot—"douse everything, and run in the cove and anchor so close to the beach, you could pitch a biscuit ashore. He'll never think o' my comin' to there, for till you get in a cable's length o' the shore, all the hawsers and chains he's got wouldn't reach the bottom. Besides, it's a lee shore and a bit breezy to-night. With the trees behind me, he'll just suddenly miss me, and pass on by, and I'll up killick and put back, and land ye, while he's still smellin' around the island."

It all turned out as the astute Hackett predicted. A little before dark the sloop was near enough to begin firing, and her two bow guns were served as fast as possible while the light lasted, though with no effect. Hackett did not fail to remark that the bow ports and rigging of the headbooms had, since he was last chased, been arranged so as to permit the sloop to fire directly forward, and he saw that he could never trust again to her losing distance by yawing in a chase to bring her guns to bear.

The ladies were hurried below, a hatch in the cabin floor was taken up, and they descended into the dark; and for half an hour they crouched low in the dirty run, half stifled by the smell of the bilge-water, and trembling with terror as they heard now and then the faint sound of one of the guns fired at them by pursuing friends. When the noise ceased they were escorted back on deck by Mr. Dewhurst, and there saw the remainder of the performance.

They ran close by the eastern shore of a large island, whose dense trees standing high on the low hills, at once enveloped them in a shade of darkness. The chasing sloop, whose ghostly sails could be so plainly seen astern, followed them. When she entered the shade, her lower sails were suddenly lost to view, only her loftier upper canvas remaining visible. The schooner ran swiftly along the weather shore, against which the surf was booming

loud and high. She-reached the little cove. Suddenly and silently her sails disappeared, folded away like the wings of a settling bird. Still obedient to her helm, she ran into the cove, rounded to, and dropped her anchor. The trees rose up on the side of the moon, a dense wall of blackness.

After awhile the form of the sloop appeared, still rushing forward under her lofty canvas, the moonlight shining palely at intervals on her topgallant sails. She passed within three hundred yards of them. Mary could see the phosphorescent foam under her bows, and the lights from her after ports. She heard a voice give a command, and she thought it was her lover's voice. It was too much for her excited spirit to bear. To think that he whom she loved was so near that she might hear him call her ! and that he was unconsciously passing her by ! "Oh, Henry ! Henry !" she cried, and she threw her arms around Isabel's neck, weeping.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE Flying Fish ran over to Santa Cruz very leisurely, being a week on the passage. Hartley went on shore at the earliest opportunity after the anchor was down ; and, without waiting to ask any questions in the town, where he might have found out that Mary was gone, he walked out to the cottage.

An air of emptiness and disuse hung over the place. The spirit which presides over the homes of men had ceased his customary work when the cottage was no longer a home. Not only did the closed windows, the neglected flowers, the springing weeds, and the hollow voice of the ghost of vacancy replying to his knock at the door, all bear witness and weigh upon his mind, but a nameless something more was there. He turned, with little hope, to

the next house, to ask them if the Dewhursts were not in town, but they told him at once that the family had sailed for the Havana two weeks before.

Then he felt all the bitterness of desolation and desolation. It was a black half-hour he passed in sombre thinking while he walked among the flower-beds where before Mary had walked with him, and sat alone in the arbor in which she had made his hours pass so swiftly.

He went back to the town and found out all that he could about their going. A new fear sprung up in his mind, a dread destined to weary and worry him greatly, a presentiment of danger to Mary from the pirates. This feeling was not decreased by the stories current of the exploits of La Hembrilla and his own recollection of her speed and boldness. He went to the ship, burning with anxiety to be off to sea. A talk with Garnet, who showed him the thing from the captain's position, convinced him of the foolishness of trying to influence Captain Merritt, and he tried to become reconciled to his rack and bear his pangs quietly. For three days he suffered more from forebodings and imagination than any one knew. Garnet alone guessed it, and he felt very sorry for his friend; but he saw there was no help but the help of time: and so he held his peace.

The sloop remained only three days before leaving Santa Cruz, but she was ten days in getting back on the south coast. The old seamen wondered among each other why both Hartley and Garnet seemed so anxious to make a quick passage, why they did not permit the least little favorable flaw to be lost, why they were so ready to put the ship at once on the other tack when headed off, why they were forever setting light sails and trimming and bracing, and watching the compass and the man at the wheel. Captain Merritt saw it, too, and guessed that the two were trying against each other their finest points of watchful and patient seamanship in a match to see who would make most knots in such a length of time.

He was wrong:

“ 'Twas love that made the yards fly round.”

Satisfied that the lurking-hole of La Hembrilla lay somewhere along the shore within the fifty miles east of the Cobre, Captain Merritt began at that distance a close and systematic search of the coast, exploring its navigable bays, rivers, creeks, and lagoons. This work required the employment of the ship's boats, and of more than one-third of her crew. While it progressed, in fact, ever since leaving Santa Cruz, Hartley had been making calculations as to the probable position of the Sarah and Jane. He had obtained all the information he could about the brig's sailing qualities and her appearance. With the last in mind, he kept a hopeless lookout for such a looking craft; with the other data he figured up her probable run from day to day, and assigned her a doubtful place on his imaginary chart. He was very miserable; far more so than he was justified in being, since the chance of the Sarah and Jane's capture was only a chance; and he would have worried himself still worse but for his constant employment.

Garnet, as soon as he knew of their coming employment, let the first lieutenant into the state of Hartley's feelings, and asked McKizick to keep his friend as busy as possible. To do this Captain Merritt had to be consulted, also. He agreed with Garnet, and for awhile poor Hartley was kept on a keen jump from one duty to another. He would have been greatly offended had he known how the trio were conspiring for his good. It was rather an undignified and juvenile position to occupy—the tool of others to advance his own interests unconsciously, and at their unknown mandate.

Every morning the ship despatched five boats as early as they could be got away. They carried provisions for the day's consumption, and the crews were armed. Each boat took a separate place to explore, the first commencing at the spot next to that last visited, the others going fur-

ther along the coast. The ship had signals for recalling them all, or any one of them, and each boat had the means of announcing any important discovery or of asking for help. Under the blazing sun the crews toiled at the oars, and through thick and gloomy shadows, finding few signs of human life. Now they searched the recesses of some winding creek, with shores of black mud thick with the dirty skeleton frames of the mangrove roots; now explored a wide-spread, pestilent lagoon; now fought against the current of some bright little river flowing fresh from the mountains. It was the hardest kind of physical labor for the men, and the duty entailed upon the officers a care and watchfulness still more harassing. The result of several days of the work was just nothing—nothing seen, nothing heard.

Late one afternoon the ship lay at anchor before a small fishing village. The boats had all returned, and were hoisted into their places on board and at the davits. The captain and McKizick were standing on the quarter-deck, talking and looking at the western sky. The sun sunk in a bloody splendor behind a low bank of clouds whose outlines were very clear cut, and the color of which was a bright hard yellow. The afternoon had been unusually still and sultry, an oppressive feeling accompanying every breath.

“Shall I give the men their hammocks, sir?” asked Briggs, who had the deck. It was not customary to ask permission to perform a routine duty like this; but even young and inexperienced Mr. Briggs could not help feeling the something in the air, which made the old seamen look uneasy, and he referred to McKizick as a matter of course. The first lieutenant, for the same reason, turned to the captain.

“Not yet,” was his reply. “I don’t half like the looks of the weather. Send down the light yards, Mr. McKizick, and then see the boats and everything about the decks are secure for heavy weather. You’ll have to work lively—your daylight is very nearly gone.”

"Aye, aye, sir." The pipe resounded shrilly, the boatswain and mates bawled the word, the men ran aloft to the order, and in five minutes the light yards had been swayed, lowered, and lashed on deck. Then for a few minutes the crew were actively engaged in passing the boat gripes and boom-boat lashings, securing the guns for sea, and fastening the heavier loose articles about the deck, which might become dangerous in case the ship should roll deeply. All this was done while the sky was clear overhead and the water smooth around; but the heavy cloud-bank in the west continued to rise, and there was the same sense of something impending, a feeling doubtless caused by the still oppressive atmosphere. When the work was done, the word was passed, "All hands stand by your hammocks!"

The men went quickly and quietly to their proper places, ranging themselves in two long lines, close to the bulworks. The master-at-arms reported to Mr. Briggs, "All up from below, sir."

"Uncover," commanded Briggs; and the long tarpaulins were quickly thrown back, exposing the line of white hammocks. "Pipe down!" The hammocks were rapidly served out by the men in the nettings, each seaman going below to swing his dreaming-bag in its place, as soon as he got it. The spar deck was quickly cleared.

Garnet, who came on watch at eight, received a warning from the captain to watch the weather. A few minutes before twelve, he sent Mr. Maskelyne, the midshipman of the quarter-deck, into the cabin to wake the captain, and report that the appearance of the sky was very threatening, and that the barometer had begun to fall.

Captain Merritt had apparently gone to bed with his clothes on, for he came on deck on the heels of the returning midshipman. He keenly scrutinized the now gloomy, cloud-covered sky, and ordered Garnet to call all hands up anchor, and send for the officers. "Keep the ham-

mock's below, Mr. Garnet ; and have the word passed to sling all clear of the messenger."

In a minute was heard Mr. Thick's pipe, clear as a bird's note, summoning his mates. The word was passed, the deep ominous voices calling the sleeping crew to new labor. By the time the drowsy officers were all on deck, the men, little delayed by toilets, were already at work. And they worked briskly, too, for they all knew there was reason. The topsails were close reefed when they were loosed, so that a short pull at the halliards tautened their leeches. The anchor was hove up, catted and fished, once more severing the sloop's connection with the solid earth. They all preferred to trust her entirely to her own element than to try to escape harm by keeping near danger. The ship was under way.

Yet she had not any way whatever. Still was the surface of the water as smooth as glass ; still was the night silent, but for the faint rumbling music of the surf and the low voices of men half-whispering as if in awe lest the dark might hear, as though their own tones appalled them ; still were the winds asleep. The starboard watch was set and the other sent below.

For half an hour more the ship lay motionless, not even turning as she lay. It was strange to be there waiting, all in readiness as if prepared to fly, and still have no power to move, to be able only to wait, to wonder in awe, or perhaps, as with some, to feel injured in having been deprived of sleep. But at last it came and ended waiting.

There came a faint, sustained bass murmur from the westward and off the shore. The sound increased momentarily in strength and changed constantly in its pitch, rising by the minutest gradations of the musical scale. All heard it and listened. It was the wind in the trees. Nearer and nearer it came, swelling in volume, and becoming strangely fierce as its tone grew higher. To the listeners in the ship it seemed to advance very slowly. Louder and louder it sounded. Some of those below heard,

and came to put their heads above the hatches and listen. The rumble of the surf was now lost in the mightier noise of the coming squall. A slight cold current of air was suddenly felt, a forerunner, which served to cast the ship with her head to the south. The tempest was now upon them and around them, its roar filling all the air. The sloop suddenly lay over upon her side with her lower yard-arms in the water, as if she had been thrown over by a blow or continued push from a solid body, and her hull quivered and groaned as though it was expressing the distress of a sentient creature which feared to be overwhelmed. The officers and men remaining on the spar-deck clung desperately to rigging, belaying-pins, spars, or bolts—anything which could give them support on the side of the steep deck, and waited, unable to help themselves further. The noise of the wind at this time was indescribably cruel and exultant; it gave the hearer, unavoidably, the idea of a savage spirit seeking to destroy and triumphing in its power. The rain came at the same time, thick, almost horizontal, and with stinging velocity.

For a moment only the stout ship was held down by the blast; then, as she gathered way, she slowly, tremblingly arose. Nothing parted or carried away, for all had been prepared for such trying emergencies as this. She raced away to the southward, twelve knots an hour, under her close-reefed topsails and foresail.

The squall blew obstinately for some time, and, when it passed over at last, was followed by angry puffs, that came at frequent intervals. These became longer, and followed each other more speedily. By morning they had settled down into a heavy gale from the west, the same storm which caught the Sarah and Jane off Cape San Antonio.

The Flying Fish passed through it with safety and comparative ease. There were the usual number of small accidents, and the ordinary amount of discomfort; but the whole was borne with a rational resignation, and as a trial to have been expected.

The ship butted vigorously and persistently into the head seas as long as the gale lasted. As each long hill of water came moving swiftly, solidly onward, she would charge it boldly. Meeting the wave there would be a tremendous concussion, a violent bump that checked her at once, making her thrill and tremble all over; and a part of the wave, a very small part, would be arrested and converted into spray and a broad spread of creamy foam, while the rest rolled grandly on. Dularge looked over the bows at the foam, and afterwards declared over his dinner of hard tack and coffee, that it resembled a thousand dozen of champagne let off at once—"quarts, you know."

Their dinner consisted of hard bread and coffee, with water and whiskey for those who wanted other fluids. They thought themselves lucky to get hot coffee, and so they were, for ordinary cooking was impossible. The coffee was made only by patient and long-continued efforts of the cook to keep the kettle in place, combined with the nimble gymnastics necessary to keep himself in place.

The rolling and pitching made all hands look carefully to their footing. The hatches had to be kept covered, because occasionally some water was taken over the bows, and because it rained constantly; and the result was that the air below became very foul and close. Altogether, it was highly disagreeable; but, as usual, all hands exerted themselves to be merry, and cheat the weather.

Garnet came down from deck into the ward-room, during the afternoon, and found Briggs busy trying to write in the dim light at the dining-table. Briggs had neglected the precaution of tying his chair-leg fast, and, getting rather absorbed in his work, he forgot to hold on to the table. As Garnet passed, the ship rolled deeply, and Briggs slid away in his chair swiftly to leeward, fetching up against the surgeon's door-sill. The chair tilted, and shot him under the door curtain, into the state-room and against the bed with considerable force. Dr. Bobus was lying down at the time. "Bless my soul, sir!"

he exclaimed, starting up, "what is the matter? Are you ill?"

Garnet showed his humorous face in the doorway. "He was writing to his duley, doctor, and, just as he was about to put down a fine thought about the storm, the ship gave a lurch, and he slid away and left it all on the table."

"First time I ever heard of sliding away from one's thought," replied the surgeon. "Hurry back, Mr. Briggs, maybe it was so heavy that you'll find it on the table yet."

The groaning and working of the ship's timbers, the howling of the wind, the tramping of the crew, and the unchecked merriment of the steerage, all came to Garnet's ears that evening; but through it all he thought he heard beside, a still small sound, a very feeble and melancholy, yet persistent noise. He recognized it as the notes of a guitar, baneful instrument, and inevitable bore in the service. He listened—could it be? Yes—it was—it was that sweet old air, "The Spanish Fandango." "Tumty, tumty, tumty, tum; tumty, tumty, tumty, tumty"—but not to anticipate the pleasure of the persons who have yet to hear this air, it should not be quoted further.

Garnet went to Hartley's state-room, and found him on the bed, firmly braced in his position, by putting his feet against the front board. His back was against a dagger-knee which was somewhat softened by the interposition of a pillow. He was playing the Fandango, and looked as if he would go on playing it to everlasting.

"Hang up your fiddle, Hal, if you want me to stay," said Garnet.

Hartley laughed, and put the guitar away. "Sit down, Will, there's some whiskey."

"You're quite cosy. Now if we could smoke here, we'd be all right."

"Yes. Do you think the gale shows any sign of breaking?"

"Not a bit," replied Garnet. "Why?"

"Oh, nothing. I thought we possibly might get the news from the Havana, by going back on the coast."

"You have no need to hear from the Havana," said Garnet, positively. "Your Sarah Jane's all right."

"What makes you think so?"

"I don't know. Well, just look at the small chance of that particular vessel being stopped. She was not an inviting prize. I don't suppose really that one ship in fifty is captured."

"That's so," answered Hartley, with a forced, uneasy laugh. "But then she might be the one. I want to hear that she has arrived. You don't *know* anything."

"Make yourself easy. I feel it in my bones, and by these presents do prophesy—"

"You have no great interest in her like mine."

"Haven't I?" said Garnet. "Oh, yes. Don't you remember that I am to marry Miss Terrell?"

"Sure enough—if you don't change your mind, and if she does change hers."

"I shan't change my mind, and I'll make a good try to make her change hers, next chance I have."

"Yes, but when will that be."

"Within a month, sir."

"Good for you," replied Hartley, who was struggling hard to hide his worry and anxiety. "You know young Lord Byron says that 'sleep is awful!' I'm afraid mine will be to-night. My bunk is wet—the deadlight leaks a good deal—and the roll keeps a fellow bobbing about so."

"Going to play your guitar all night for pastime?" asked Garnet.

"Yes. I shall go into your room so as to have the benefit of your company. I know you are fond of music."

"I'm afraid your fiddle will get hurt, if you risk it in that rash way."

"Oh, music will do you good. It will lull you to sleep," said Hartley.

"It would be cruel to make my sleep depend on that

thing," replied Garnet, with a contemptuous glance at the guitar case.

"The vibrations of the cat's bowels would, of course, make yours yearn sympathetically, so you would have cat-naps."

"There, Harry," said Garnet compassionately, "that's enough. Let's try for a smoke."

They got their pipes and started out. Just then the ship gave a very deep roll, and a tremendous crash arose in the ward-room pantry. The fun in the steerage ceased for an instant, and then came an uproarious burst of laughter.

"Hark to the young scamps!" said Garnet smiling.

Hartley laughed with them.

"Confounded cubs!" said the red and wrathful paymaster, coming half-dressed out of his state-room. "How they love to hear our dishes break! I told that steward to keep the plates stowed. I'll have him at the mast to-morrow!" The ship lurched quickly to windward, and Pay had to run clear across the ward-room to save his balance. Then came the deeper and quicker lee lurch, and Pay darted back to leeward, and was lost to sight in his own room, in a manner so unexpected to all as to excite their risibilities.

"The celebrated actor, Pay, appears in the rôle of the 'Injured Caterer,' for one night only," said Garnet, as he and Hartley went out of the ward-room.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE gale hung on for several days, and all hands were happy when it left them. The sloop soon regained her drift, and returned to the place where she had left off the search. Resuming the explorations, she carried them on again toward the Cobre.

As they neared that river, the shore presented fewer openings, and the interior bodies of water which they discovered were more easily examined. Consequently the boats crept along the coast much faster than at first.

It so chanced that Hartley was sent in charge of the first boat that was despatched after the ship had passed El Cáyo del Pescadór. The wind was southeast and fresh, so while the Fish ran on toward the river, he made sail on his cutter and stood in along the lee of the key. Reaching the main beach he coasted just outside the surf, watching very sharply for any break or opening indicative of the mouth of an interior water. None rewarded his scrutiny, but the sail was sufficiently pleasant. The light cutter rose and fell with abandon on the smooth rollers, and the gentle heaving swing was a delight to our impressionable sailor. The shallowness of the water made the waves run the higher, so that in the trough the sails would be nearly becalmed, while on the crests they would swell out plump and firm. Then, the cutter would spring to the fresh quartering breeze. The rocks and shoals lay further out; where Hartley had picked his course there was no difficulty or danger to meet.

Nothing was found until they had passed a slight projection of rocks, and commenced coasting along the graceful scimitar-like sweep of sand which formed the beach of a bay. The coxswain of the boat thought he saw a creek ahead, whereupon Hartley, using his glass, made out water running up into the land. Though it was a mile away, a

very few minutes sufficed to carry them into the opening. It was the prettiest place Hartley had seen in all their explorations.

A little green hill rose on the right, and on the left was a steep bluff with a narrow beach at its foot. Trees clung where they could upon its face, grasses and little bushes grew in the seams of the rock and on the small shelves. Even the vertical faces of stone were at this season covered with green mosses. There was enough of the rich gray color of the stone visible to redeem it from the weakness of mere prettiness. It was still ante-meridian, for they had started very early, and the trees which grew between the cliff-foot and the water, as well as those which leaned out from their rocky root-hold, cast on the face of the bluff a plexus of sunshine and shadows, constantly varying with the wind's suggestions. A few very tall trees grew on each side the channel, and high up they held their heads amicably near each other, as though they meant to kiss, one day. On the right there were some clumps of bamboo, that feathery leaved plant which is graceful in all its forms and movements, and beautiful in its tender color beyond the power of words to describe. [Whoever dies without seeing bamboo may have to go unconsolated to the discomfort of a super-tropical country, where they have it not. To come unexpectedly upon an Indian village hidden in a thicket of bamboo is to discover an illuminated poem—that is, if the sun be shining.]

The boat glided into the lovely channel, but she was soon becalmed, for it was wind-sheltered. Lowering and stowing away the sails, they took to the oars. They rounded the point at the head of the reach, and the charming little oval basin burst upon Hartley's sight, without any warning. He directed the coxswain to steer to the head of the haven, where he saw a house. The boat was run straight ashore, her bows sliding up on the slope of hard sand; and Hartley looked about.

The basin was apparently without any means of egress,

for from his *point de vue* the circumscribing strip of sand was an unbroken ellipse, and the fringe of trees above it drooped over it continuously all around the curve.

"Get out and stretch yourselves, men," he ordered. "Don't go away out of hail."

"There's been somebody here before us," said the bowman, leaping out. "See the tracks, Mr. Hartley?"

"Ye—es."

"There's been a boat hauled up here more nor once't," remarked another man, pointing to several keel-marks, with many tracks about them.

Hartley examined all the indications, told the men to look about sharp, and walked up to the house. It was a small, mean-looking, weather-beaten hut of pine boards, with a window made of an ancient port-sash. The front door yielded to his push and he entered. There was only one room, and it had a floor of earth. In one corner lay a pile of dirty bedding, and a very old grass hammock was suspended from the poles that served as joists. Vagrant rays entered by way of holes in the rotting roof, and brightened the cabin more than the subdued light which struggled through the grimy panes of the one window.

Hartley tried the back door, but it was locked, and he did not feel warranted to force it open. Outside, a thick growth of high bushes, woven together closely by running briars, came close up to the hut on each side, and their dense entanglements were more than he cared to encounter, without some definite object in view.

Just to the left of the house, at the end of a deep gully, there was the mouth of a pretty little stream of clear fresh water. It debouched between high banks, and, where it ran into the haven, spread out in shallows, rippling and flashing in the sun, as it ran over snowy white sand.

All was so lovely about him, that he forgot his anxieties and delivered himself over to Nature, who after all had the prior claim upon him, in that she was his mistress before he had ever seen Mary. If he sighed at all now, it

was for longing that Mary might be with him to give to her sweet harmless rival the praise due her various charms.

[Stop, O reader, and picture to yourself that lovely little lake. Its serenity and beauty yet fill the errant traveller, who chances upon it, with a sense of rest and peace, with a feeling that he has come far enough. There is even now something worshipful and sufficing in its calm. If you should be called a pagan for yielding yourself in homage to Nature there, you might say in deprecation of severity that the sin would not be often repeated, for certainly you could not often find equal occasion.]

Hartley left the place with regret, and reached the ship, after another swift sail, at eleven o'clock. He found her anchored in the Cobre in such a position that it was easy, as the wind then blew, to get under way and run out. This the captain resolved to do, after receiving Hartley's report. His plan was to go over to the eastward again for a few days, stopping the search for the present; and to return without warning, and send in a boat expedition in hope of catching La Hembrilla in the Hole, or Hartley Haven, as they called the newly discovered water. He agreed now that here was her hiding place.

On running down the river, however, the pirate and the brig were seen coming toward them, and chase was given at once. Everybody felt sure that La Hembrilla was caught at last, and everybody but Hartley was in a high good humor. He went straight to the captain and told him there could be no doubt that Mr. Dewhurst and family were in the pirate. He had recognized the Sarah and Jane beyond question by her correspondence with the description he had obtained in Santa Cruz, and he was sure that their friends were now in the vessel they were pursuing. They would be in great danger if the Flying Fish should fire. He begged the captain not to open fire, at least not until the sloop was near enough to make sure of sending her shot away from the pirate's cabin.

"I am very sorry, Mr. Hartley," replied Captain Mer-

ritt with compassion, "but I cannot do what you wish. I do not know that Mr. Dewhurst and his family are not still aboard the brig, and you do not know it. Your idea is probably correct, but I do not *know* that it is. I will give orders to aim at the sails, but I must open fire as soon as the shot will reach. It is my duty, and I would do it if my own family were there."

And as soon as possible, the bow guns commenced firing. Hartley watched the arching flight of each shot, with a terrible anxiety, as long as there remained a doubt of its striking the schooner. They were his own guns which were in the bow ports, but McKizick had taken a notion of working them, for once. Until dusk made the aim uncertain, he did not draw an easy breath. He wished for awhile that the schooner could go faster, to get out of the way of danger. When the darkness stopped the firing, he felt better again, for he thought that before the moon set, the Fish would surely overhaul and capture the schooner, and his beloved one would be rescued without further hazard.

Bitter was his disappointment, and that of all, when La Hembrilla vanished. The pirate was not missed until the sloop was nearly past the island, for it was all the time supposed that she was but a little distance ahead, and that when she cleared the shadow, she would again become visible. The sloop was put about at once, and ran back abreast the land. All the rest of the night she blockaded the coast, with keen eyes on board watching vainly for the lost prize. The dawn showed an empty coast, and a clear horizon. Thereupon the captain, much disgusted, shaped his course back toward the mouth of the Cobre, carrying every stitch of canvas the ship would bear.

Arriving there in the afternoon, a dismasted hulk was seen lying among the rocks of the mouth of Hartley Haven. The sloop ran in to reconnoitre.

The hulk lay so still that she was at first supposed to be aground. As they drew nearer, however, the officers

of the Fish saw that there were men on board, and that she was secured in her position by means of hawsers carried out to the surrounding rocks. Hartley was the keenest watcher on board the sloop. It was he who reported to the captain, that it was the hull of the Sarah and Jane they saw, that her masts had been cut away, and that she was then sinking, to his belief, in order to shut up a channel.

The captain took a careful look for himself, and so far agreed with Hartley, that he immediately ordered the first lieutenant to go to quarters, and to have two boats manned and armed to send in. He meant to tow the brig away from the channel before she sunk, if it were possible; for he thought that it was enough for him to see the pirates' interest, in order to know his own desirable course. He could not understand why they had wanted to stop up the channel, but he was sure since they were trying to do that, he would try to keep it open.

The battery began firing at once, with the intention of driving the pirates away, and leaving the men a clear deck on which to work. Meanwhile the Fish approached the Sarah and Jane as rapidly as the boats could have done. The pirates did not long remain to risk the shot; the firing was too accurate on that occasion. Taking to their boat they pulled ashore as fast as they could, vastly annoyed by the ricochetting balls, which dashed spray over them. They were only spurred to exertion. A small boat bobbing about on the waves, is a hard thing to hit with a heavy gun in a moving ship.

When within half a mile, and while still firing, the quarter-boats of the ship were sent in under Garnet's direction to warp the brig out of the channel. Before they were fairly started, however, a shot cut the large hawser by which the bow of the Sarah and Jane was held to the wind. She drifted back quickly, the sudden strain snapping a small rope which had been used for a port quarter-guy, and leaving her hanging by one hawser, carried forward from the starboard quarter, to a rock off the bow. She immedi-

ately winded, swung out of the channel, and lay still, with her head to leeward. The boat party pushed on, nevertheless, but before they reached her, she went down. When they came to the place, they could row over her, and could see her by looking down on the shady side of the cutters. They returned to the ship, now hove to and waiting, and found the battery secured, and all on board quiet again.

"Leave the cutters down, McKizick," said the captain, gleefully. "I think we ought to catch Mr. Hackett this time."

"Plain as a pike-staff, sir. He's inside, and he was blocking up the channel to keep us out. But I'd never have thought it possible to get his little craft in through those rocks—much less a ship of our size."

"Aye—but he ought to remember the boats, eh, McKizick?"

"Captain, you must let me go in charge this time. It's too important a business to pass me over."

"Yes," admitted the captain, "I suppose you must go. In fact, I don't care to send any young man in here. You'd better take Mr. Hartley, as he's been there before, and let him pilot you in. Take the launch, and first and second cutters, and go as soon as you can get away. I shall not give you any instructions—but see here, McKizick, I trust to your age and experience. Don't push things too far. Give up, and back out in good time, if necessary."

McKizick was off at work immediately, getting out the launch and cutters. In a comparatively short time the three were all ready alongside, Hartley in the first cutter, and Briggs in the second, and the launch waiting for Mr. McKizick. That officer reported to the captain, and received the order to shove off, and in a few minutes the boats were pulling ashore. It was about four o'clock.

Hartley went ahead in the first cutter, to show the way by which he had so easily entered the Haven before. He made first for the point of rocks, and then pulled down

the beach as on the previous occasion. The advance was silent, in marked contrast to that on the day in which the *Mercutio* had been recaptured in such dashing style. The only noises were the sound of the surf, and the oars' measured dipping. In the bright afternoon sunshine the boats glided along parallel with the white beach and past its background of foliage, without a word spoken or an order given aloud. No sign of an enemy could be seen ; all was apparent solitude.

When near the entrance, McKizick checked the column and gave his directions briefly. As soon as they got fairly inside the Haven, and saw the position of *La Hembrilla*, they were to pull to her as fast as they could and board ; afterward to await his orders. He cautioned the men not to stop rowing in order to fire at anything, and he directed the marines in the other boats to wait till those with him opened fire, before they began. Then the column advanced as before, Hartley still leading.

They pulled swiftly up the narrow entrance between the trees, each officer looking out for signs of a foe in the bushes or on the bluff, and each feeling that the pirates had every advantage. The expedition was at the mercy of even a weak and cowardly force, because a few men could without risk defend that narrow water pass against a large body. Perched on the high rocks and hidden in the bushes, unseen enemies could easily pick them off with safety to themselves. But the enemy did not show himself, and as the boats neared the point whose projection hid the Haven from sight, all began to feel easier, and to doubt more strongly that the schooner was there.

Hartley's boat passed the rocky promontory, and wheeled into the Haven. One glance showed him *La Hembrilla*, lying at the other end of the water with her broadside sprung around, a few men on her deck standing around what he knew to be a gun, and on the beach to the right of the schooner, a similar party about another piece. He stood up and commanded

fiercely, "Give way, men! give way!" at the same time looking back at McKizick and pointing toward the schooner. At that instant there came, altogether, a puff of smoke, a bang! and a round shot skipping past his boat. It was the signal. A chorus of demoniac yells, a rattling of small-arms, and a shower of musket balls succeeded, coming bewilderingly from every side at once. Blue wreaths of powder-smoke curled up on the cliff-top, or along its base, and among the bushes opposite. Several of his men dropped their oars with cries of pain, or savage revengeful oaths, or with the nerveless yielding and down-sinking of sudden death. The rest, confused and hindered by their wounded and dead comrades, seemed panic-struck, some rowing, some backing water, some wildly firing their pistols at the face of the bluff. The discordant yelling was kept up all around, and the bullets pattered fast.

Just as McKizick rounded the point, in the heavier, slower launch, the gun was fired from La Hembrilla. The shot struck Hartley's cutter so fair that it tore out her bows at the water line and passed through the boat from end to end, leaving a ragged hole in the stern. She began to fill and sink at once, and the crew jumped into the water, some holding on to her gunwale, some swimming to meet the launch. The yells and cheers of the pirates were redoubled at this mark of their success, and they now turned all their attention upon the heavier boat. McKizick pushed on toward the cutter, which was floating level with the surface of the water. As he came, Hartley stood up in the stern, ready to jump on board. Suddenly, and when the launch was close at hand, he threw his arms up, fell backward in the water, and sunk.

The launch in a shower of spattering bullets ran alongside the wrecked cutter, quickly rescued the few men still clinging to her, and, turning where she lay, pulled back as fast as possible. McKizick had seen Hartley fall, and knew it useless to look for him. As the boat pulled away, another

round shot came from the gun on shore and shaved off all the oars to starboard close to the gunwale. The remaining oars were quickly divided and the launch turned the point, receiving as she did so a parting salute in the shape of a hurtling stand of grape from La Hembrilla. Briggs had winded and got out early in the action, and his cutter was making excellent time down the entrance, pursued by scattering shots, his marines firing back blindly. When he saw the plight of his superior he stopped, backed, and taking his painter, assisted him by towing and by dividing the fire. Even in the pass they were not out of danger, for the pirates made up for allowing a quiet entry by keeping up their fire as long as the boats were within range.

When clear of the shore, the bullet holes in the launch were plugged in a more efficient manner, the water bailed out of her, and part of the men transferred to the cutter. There was not a more unhappy person in the Navy than McKizick, as he went back to the ship with two boats instead of three. Fear of injury to his professional reputation, and mortification at failure, he hardly felt at all. He knew he had obeyed orders and performed his duty intelligently; but he was overwhelmed with the sense of loss to the service and of personal loss in the men who had died that day. Even the joy of successful combat cannot pay a kind-hearted man for his messmates; much worse does he feel to lose them in defeat.

Meantime Hartley was not dead by any means, and the mourning for him was as useless as it was sincere. When he stood up in the cutter, whose gunwale was level with the water, his sudden movement and her lack of stability caused her to roll. Stepping quickly backward to regain his balance, Hartley struck his heel on the floating grating and fell overboard, instinctively throwing up his hands to save himself. He fell on his back and sunk. Rising immediately, but so near the cutter he was not distinguished from the seamen who clung to her gunwale, he struck out for the launch without waiting for her to rescue him. Sud-

denly he felt his ankle seized with a desperate grip : a drowning man had caught him. Realizing the danger of being hobbled in this manner he struggled to reach the cutter. The attempt was almost successful, when the man, with a convulsive, violent effort, seized him around the thighs and threw his whole weight upon him in trying to climb up out of the water. The pair went down together, Hartley pinioned behind, striving to twist around and break loose, the insensate seaman holding on with a vice-like embrace. Hartley thought his last hour had come. His eyes were closed, but he could feel himself sinking. Down—down—down he went, slowly, but steadily. Myriads of thoughts flashed through his mind, involved like the play of the sparks in some intricate fire-wheel. He remembered home and his messmates, and Will Garnet, and Mary, and sweet life ; and wondered through it all while desperately fighting to free himself of his destroyer, if he would ever stop going down. All at once, he recollected that his arms were at liberty ; and ceasing his vain efforts to break the hold of the frantic seaman, he gave powerful upward strokes which quickly brought him to the surface. Oh, sweet delicious breath !

He had scarcely time to breathe twice before the mad, relentless seaman, again struggling to get upon his body, forced him under the water once more. This time he had better possession of his wits, and quickly arose by using his arms. He came up by the boat, placed one hand on her gunwale, and was about to assist with the other his desperate companion ; but, as he reached down, the sailor relaxed his hold and sunk. As usual with drowning men he had killed himself.

Hearing the last discharge of the gun from La Hembrilla and the cries of the pirates on shore, Hartley remembered his own precarious, exposed position, and lowered his head as deeply in the water as he could, to breathe. He saw the pirates running along the bluffs, gun in hand, toward the part that commanded the entrance, and it

darted into his mind that now was the best time to get ashore and hide, while their attention was drawn away. He at once struck out quietly but strongly for the beach at the foot of the cliffs, thinking that his chances of escape in that direction were better than to swim the longer distance toward the opposite and lower beach, where the pirates, with less to engage their attention, would be more likely to see him. He reached the shallow water, and, wading out, threw himself quickly in the thick bushes which grew on the slope of earth between the sand and the cliff-foot. As soon as he was screened from view, he crawled up the incline and obtained a comfortable hidden seat under the trunk of a leaning tree, with a shield of weeds in front of him.

The voices of the pirates grew fainter, and their firing slackened. After awhile it ceased entirely and they began to straggle back along the cliffs in twos and threes, loudly triumphing over their success. He could hear and understand a part of their talk as they passed above him, and he gathered that they had not lost a man, while they believed that the loss of the Fish's party was very great. Once, a gruff voice gave directions in English about posting a lookout, going on when that was done to exult profanely over the death of the officer who had commanded the leading boat. It was very disagreeable to Hartley, though in the mistake of the last rejoicing he found one sweet grain of comfort.

By and by the pirates were all gone, and the only noise he heard was from the men on the schooner. Peering cautiously from his concealing blind, he was surprised to see that the party on board were preparing to leave her, and that the gun he had seen on the beach was gone. He watched them get into their boat, and pull across the few yards of water between them and the shore. They landed, hauled their boat up on the beach, and walked into the old hut. The door was closed behind the last man, and he

saw them no more, though he thought he heard their voices again, and watched closely for them.

Then there appeared another gang of men, twenty-five in number, as near as he could count, on the edge of the cliff abreast of the schooner, and walking away from him. They stopped near the hut, and descended by sliding down, one by one, the trunk of a slender tree, which grew within a few feet of the rocks. They went along the beach, some of them smoking, reached the mouth of the little stream which ran between them and the hut, and walked, as they came to it, deliberately into the water without pausing. Hartley expected that they would cross over to the hut, but instead of that, they waded straight on up the bed of the brook.

The last man stopped in the water, and turning where he stood, hailed the schooner. The hail was answered by a person Hartley had not seen hitherto, and who had apparently been left as a lookout. He could not understand what passed, but he heard the two laughing. Then the man in the brook walked on briskly in the shallow water to rejoin his companions, and directly the last of their forms disappeared behind a bend in the high bank. Hartley was alone and safe for the time. He set himself to study the situation, and make his plans.

His first idea was to get back to the Flying Fish. He thought it over, and saw that it could probably be done with no great trouble, by exercising prudence and patience. By waiting where he was until dark, he could get into the water and swim to the eastern side of the entrance, where he would find shelter in the fringe of trees along the beach. He thought he could avail himself of their concealment to travel out on the point. There he could hide till morning, when the Fish would be likely to come near enough to see his signal for help.

Almost resolved on this plan, he remembered Mary. It needed little argument to convince himself that it was his duty to learn what he could of the pirates' strength and

position, before trying to regain his ship, and he at once determined on a rôle, which, without the influence of the love in his heart, would have been dismissed with disgust—the rôle of a spy. He fell to pondering on what to do, but with such slight *data*, he could not make up his mind. All he knew was that the pirates had a camp not far distant, and he had seen how to start to it, but here his knowledge failed. He resolved, therefore, to remain where he was until dark, not long distant, and then to slip up the brook as best he might, trusting to luck and the inspiration of the moment to keep him out of difficulties.

In the mean time he occupied himself by taking off his clothing, and wringing it as dry as he could before putting it on again. That task completed, he resumed his seat under the leaning tree, and ruminated. His thoughts were not agreeable, for the bloody repulse of the expedition cast him down, and his own position was at best uncertain, separated from the commissariat; but the chance of acting for himself was pleasant, and the hope of seeing Mary, buoyant.

When the twilight was far enough advanced to make the shadow of the cliff dark, and to render it difficult to distinguish objects within it, Hartley left his snug nook and worked his way cautiously and speedily along the slope in the direction of the schooner. Her lookout man could be seen pacing up and down her deck; so whenever there was an open space to cross, Hartley had to avail himself of the time during which the man was walking away from him. Then he would run across the exposed ground, and drop again into concealment, behind some friendly bush or tussock. As he approached, he saw a light shining faintly through the small square window of the hut. His advance was very easy until he came to the place where he saw he must leave the shelter entirely, in order to reach the mouth of the brook. This disconcerted him, for the open distance was nearly fifty yards, and a part of that was through the water, where wading would impede

his progress. He could not venture to attract attention by the splashing which running in the brook would make. The schooner was not more than forty yards from the open place, and it was plainly impossible to traverse the whole distance unseen. The ground was clear and level up to the foot of the bluff, and the line of the cliffs ran past the space in such a direction, that the moon shone on its whole face. There could be no obscurity and safe passage obtained by skirting their base. His only means was to cross the open space.

He had almost resolved to go back and try to scale the cliff, to force his way along its edge, and, descending again, endeavor to reach the stream higher up, when he observed a patch of shadow about half-way between him and the hut. A tree growing on the bluff thrust out one long arm, on the end of which was the helping hand, the tufts of foliage which threw the shadow.

Hartley watched until the lookout had commenced the part of his walk leading forward and away: then, rising to his feet he ran swiftly, his footsteps making no sound on the yielding sand, to the patch of shade, and threw himself within it, prone. Breathless and excited he watched, as he lay motionless, for the lookout to turn and walk aft, and he continued to watch after the man had begun his approaching progress. He saw with relief that the man finished the length of the deck without a pause in his gait or any other indication of the surprise which would attend discovery. He reached the taffrail, paused, gazed aimlessly about him while Hartley's heart beat a *galop*, yawned profoundly, and strolled away again toward the bows, humming a soft air. Hartley heeded the air little beyond the assurance it gave him that the shadow was dark enough to make his form indistinct, and that he was so far undiscovered; and he resolved that, at the next turn, he would try to get over the second half of the difficult course. Unfortunately the resolution was a little late. The musical pirate came aft humming, sat down on the

affrail with his face toward the humbled officer, who was literally crouching in the dust, deliberately struck a light with flint and steel, lighted a cigar, and set himself to smoke. Hartley watched him with disgust and apprehension; and for the first time began to wish him at the devil, or somewhere else out of the way. He knew that the moon was sinking and that the shadow would move rapidly along the ground, leaving his Neptuneship out of the little pond of darkness, high and dry on a bank of light. He tried to recall how long a cigar usually lasted, and to make a calculation as to the time for which the shadow of the branch would continue to cover him; but either his memory failed to serve him as well as usual, or else he was too much worried for mental arithmetic, for the only result he could reach was to see the shadow in front of him slowly moving and leaving fresh places exposed in the moonshine.

CHAPTER XXV.

AT last, making a slow and careful twist of his neck to look, he found that one of his feet was in the light. He drew it back very quickly—his aversion to the lunar influence was sudden in one so free from superstition—and then he painfully began to work his body to the east by slow contortions. He laughed in after days to remember that peculiar race with a shadow, but it was no amusement to him at the time. The shadow was not any too large, and did not fit him any too well: to keep just in it without exposure, and by very slow quiet movements, was not easy, and beside he had to watch his smoking blockader.

Suddenly that person rose and again commenced his deliberate stroll. Scarcely was his back turned before Hartley was on his feet, running as rapidly toward the brook's mouth as his legs would carry him. Nearing the

water he moderated his speed to avoid making a splash. A glance to the right showed him there was plenty of time. He pushed on, however, as fast as he could without noise, toward the angle of the opposite bank of the brook, reached it, and in a second more was safe behind it, out of sight from the Haven.

He was almost overcome by the fatigues he had undergone, and by the sudden reflex of excitement hitherto unfelt and sense of peril heretofore dominated, and he leaned up against the concave wall of damp earth for support while he recovered. As he stood in the cool, rapid water of the shallow stream, it suddenly occurred that he had undertaken a task which might prove too much for him. "If the start is like this, what will it be after awhile?" he asked himself, and almost wished he hadn't been so foolhardy; and then he went on up the brook.

He had to pass behind the hut, the back of which he had never seen. Just before he was abreast of it he stopped and listened. There was not any sound within, nor could he see more, peeping over the top of the bank, than the light shining through the chinks. He advanced again, keeping his eyes upon the door, and planting his feet successively in the water with care. He passed the rude steps cut in the bank, and there, within three yards of the door, could still hear no sound. Reassured, he pushed on more rapidly, though as quietly as ever.

But hardly had he taken a dozen steps when he heard the door grate on its hinges and some one walk out. Turning, petrified and without an expedient left, he saw in the moonlight a negro walking down the stairs, bareheaded. The black saw him at the same moment, and called out, "Wait fo' me!"

There was nothing for it but to wait. As the negro came up Hartley saw the uselessness of trying to avoid a meeting; and reflected like lightning that he must kill the negro unless he happened to escape particular notice by his familiarity with the Spanish language. The negro

came up by his side and at once exclaimed, "What you got you' sword on now, fo'?"

Hartley had forgotten the sword, but resolving that the thing which had betrayed should serve him, he drew it and rushed at the black.

"O mercy, marster!" gasped the man, recoiling, and as he jumped back he stumbled and fell. Hartley had the blade raised for a blow, but the appeal to mercy made him pause. "I didn't know you, sah;—I won't tell, sah! Oh, Mass' Luftenit, don't kill me!" pleaded the darkey.

"Get up, man," said Hartley. "I don't want to hurt you, but if you make any noise I'll spit you like a toad." The negro arose shivering and trembling as if he had an ague fit. "How did you know me?" asked Hartley, taking him by the arm and holding the sword ready to stop instantly any attempt at flight or alarm.

"Put de sword up, mass'! I swear to God, I don't want to do nuffin but he'p you! I'm de man you ketched aboa'd de brig de time you had de fight at P'int Tresillo. You save my life, mass': I'se gwine to he'p you all I kin, so he'p me God."

Hartley recognized the boy, and was impressed by his earnest voice and manner. He sheathed his sword.

"Come dis way quick, mass'; de watch on de schoonah ain't had no suppah, an his woman 'll be comin down wid it now, fo' long," said the negro, motioning up the stream. Hartley hesitated, dubious about trusting himself to such a guide, and thinking by the negro's own tale he was going straight to meet the woman. "Come quick, Mass' Luftenit!" urged the darkey. "Ain't got no time to lose, sah!" Hartley followed him at that, keeping very close and ready to punish the least sign of treachery. They went up the winding bed of the brook to where the waters forked. The negro led him up the right-hand branch and around a bend to a little beach of sand. "Now Mass," said he, "set down and rest you'self. You bettah take you' sword off an' hide it in de brush somewhar about,

and put you' coat on de wrong side out. Dem buttons a heap too shiny." Hartley followed the suggestion of the sable adviser except that he kept his sword at hand.

The negro went on, "I was jest a-gwine for my suppah. Ain't you had nuffin to eat sence dinnah, sah?"

"No," answered Hartley, feeling that the darkey was taking the lead very soon, but at the same gaining confidence.

"Well, mass, I spec' you bettah le' me go git you some suppah—got turkle to night—you mos' dead fo' sumfen to eat." And seeing that Hartley was about to refuse to let him go away, he earnestly went on, "I don' b'long to dis gang, nohow. I b'long to Mass' Robert Johnson down on de eas'n sho', and I wisht I nebber run off. I'se gwine back soon's I kin—I gwine to leab dis cutthroat gang de fus chance—I ain't no pirit, I ain't, I nebber know'd whar I was gwine to, when I shipped into de schooner I nebber wanted to come nohow—I wants you to he'p me git away I wants to go in you' ship—"

"What made you run away from us when you were with us?" interrupted the lieutenant.

"I 'lowed you all would hang me, 'cause you ketched me wid dem pirts. I know'd you would."

"What made you fight so hard when we took the brig?"

"Don' talk so loud, mass'—somebody might hee-eh you. I done run away from dis gang dat time—try to git over to Matanzas and ship. I jess come acrost de udders, and I hab to go wid 'em. I stayed behind in de brig a-puppus to gib myself up, and some o' dem triflin' sailors tacted me wid dere swords. I hab to fight den. Mass, you ain't got no reason to be afeard o' nuffin, I gwine to do—all I want is to git back to Mass' Robert Johnson's down on de Eas'n Sho'."

"What's your name?"

"Cato, sah—Cato Johnson."

"Well, Cato, I am going to trust you. Where's the camp?"

"Quârters up de lef' hand fork, sah, 'bout two hundred yards. You could hee-eh 'em talkin' and singin' if it wasn't suppah time."

"How long have they been back from sea?"

"Come back dis mornin', sah. Fotch whole crew an' officers prisoners, and de passengers—ole gemman, ole lady—tol'ble ole, and two fine young ladies. I waits on 'em 'at dere house at de quarters. One young lady, I done tole her all 'bout mysef, and ax her to try to git Mass' Dewhuss take me 'long when he ransoms. Tole her 'bout de fight when I got cotched, and she ax me all 'bout you, dat Miss Is'bel."

"Miss Isabel!" exclaimed Hartley, thoroughly aroused, "What did Miss Mary say?"

The darkey showed his white teeth in the moonlight, with a gleam of merriment, but made no reply.

"What did she say?" demanded Hartley.

"She say 'deah Henry,' sah." Hartley was delighted, but did not pursue the question. "You' name Henry, sah?" asked Cato.

"Yes, you rascal: why?"

"Nuffin, sah; ony I want to know how to call you by name, sah. Miss Ma-ay tink a heap o' you, Mass' Henry."

"Well, Cato, I'm glad to hear it. See here. I want to get them away from there and aboard the ship. If you will help me I will give you a thousand dollars when they are all aboard, and you shall have a passage home."

"Dat suit me mighty well, mass'. I'se gwine to do all I kin, anyhow."

"I'm nearly starved, Cato: I want some of that turtle. Can you get me some safely?"

"Oh, yes, sah, nobody take notice. Allus takes my suppah down to de cabin to eat it."

"Can you take me where I can see Miss Mary?"

"Yes, sah; on'y I spec' you better not go no closter 'n you is now."

"Can you see Miss Mary, and speak to her privately when you go up?"

"Yes, sah."

"Tell her I am on shore, and will be up to see her this evening; and give her my love, Cato."

"Yes, sah—done got dat, I spec'." The darkey's teeth were again visible for an instant.

"Never mind, Cato. Now go along, and get back as quick as you can."

"Good-by, Mass' Henry. Back to'reely." And Cato went rapidly down the creek bed, his disappearance being to Hartley like the vanishing of a kind black angel.

Hartley walked up and down the dry bank to keep himself warm; but he hardly needed the exercise. In spite of his damp clothing and his hunger, his glowing heart made him unmindful of discomfort. The thought that he was so near Mary, that he was to see her so soon, and the unintended message of love, which Cato had delivered—they fed and warmed him for the time. He tried to plan, tried to think, but his mind went constantly back to the one delicious involuntary theme of Mary so near, Mary so soon. Even the peril of his position did not present itself; he did not once more suspect the negro who now controlled his destiny.

In about twenty minutes that worthy returned, bringing a tin cup, a plate, and a spoon, and a small bucket, from which issued a savory perfume. Hartley, half-famished, fell upon the contents of the bucket, which was a thick soup or chowder made of turtle, and ate with returning strength, while he listened to Cato.

"I went up," said Cato, "and I seen Mr. Dewhuss a settin' in de do', and Miss Dewhuss behine him, an I ax him lemme git in to git de broom. Miss Ma-ay and Miss Is'bel bofe in de inside room a-talkin' wid de do' open. I watch de chance and tell Miss Ma-ay you heah. She got rale white, and I 'lowed she was gwine to faint away. I say shoo to Miss Is'bel, and I fotch Miss Ma-ay a drink o'

water. She felt better den, and tole Miss Is'bel all about it, and she tole her not to say nothing to her pa, cause you would sen' word to him when de right time come. Miss Ma-ay send you her love and say, she's a-comin' to de big rock, when I whistle Ole Virginny. You like de turkle, sah?"

"You're a fine fellow, Cato. I'll stand your friend for that turtle. You've done well so far, and if you manage as smartly hereafter we shall all get away without trouble."

"No, Mass' Henry, you can't git 'em away. Dere's somebody watching de house day an' night. You bettah not go up dere you'sef. Capen's a mighty hard man, sah, an dat mate—dat dog, Arrowson—he love to kill you. Dey all cutt'roat debbils, sah—love to kill folks. You bettah go back to de ship and fetch all you' men, and 'tact 'em de way I show you."

"Which way."

"Well, sah, de quarters in a holly, like. Got a high rock wall on three sides, an ony one place to git up—sort o' narrer stairs in de rock. Dis side ob de holly nex' to us is all open, sah. You lan' all you men in de Cobre at de cove—de creek runs in on dis side cross from de cove—dere's a canoe in de creek—you lan' 'em all dere, and fetch some o' dem big black cannons what I seen in you' ship, an' you sen' plenty han's to de stairs to keep 'em from runnin' off dat-a-way, and take de rest an' de cannons, an come roun' an' go up de creek, an' you kin ketch all de rascals in dere own trap."

Hartley got Cato to explain it more thoroughly, and was surprised at the good strategy of the plan, leaving out the negro's ignorance of the uses of naval artillery, and the rough nature of the ground for transporting guns on ship carriages. He determined to see the place for himself, and to try, without delay, to effect the escape of the whole family.

By this time he had eaten all the turtle he could, and Cato had finished the remains.

"I'm ready to start now, Cato."

"Yes, sah ; le' me hide de dishes, Mass' Henry, it's too resky fo' you to go up dere, but if you is boun' to go, I'll show you de way. You must be pow'ful still and keerful."

Hartley followed Cato down to the foot of the stream, and then up the left-hand branch. Cato whispered to him as they entered it, "Mass' Henry, if anybody comes down to meet us, we got to run back whar we was, an' if dey comes behin' run ahead, an' if dey comes bofe sides I lif' you up on de bank." He walked steadily up the gradual ascent formed by the bed of the stream, diverging on to dry ground when the occasional widening of the banks left a little strip of shore, and now and then pausing to listen. As they advanced, voices and laughter became audible, both of men and women ; and after awhile, fitful red gleams of light began to strike on the branches high above their heads. With warning hand Cato cautioned Hartley to silence and vigilance. They listened intently as they pushed on more slowly.

The sounds grew louder and the light flickered more continuously on the foliage above. Soon Hartley thought he was about to walk out undisguised among his enemies, for he caught glimpses of a fire through the intervening undergrowth. He could hear the tinkling of a guitar, and understand by snatches the louder exclamations of the pirates. Just as he was about to make Cato stop, that person turned to the right into a shallow gully worn through the bank—up there much lower than it was further down,—and pushed up its narrow pathway between the closely approaching vegetation on either side. In several places Hartley, following, had to get down on hands and knees and crawl under a mass of matted vines which filled the upper part of this natural covered way.

After going perhaps twenty paces the gully became so shallow as to be of no more use. Cato dropped on his hands and knees, and began to bore his way along through the bushes and vines, closely followed by the lieutenant,

who was very glad to have a precedent for his proceeding. Very soon the thicket became thinner. Hartley would have arisen to walk through it, but Cato motioned him down with apprehensive quickness. Turning once more toward the light, the black crawled in that direction, edging away to the left, until he reached a large mass of rock. Behind this he stood up, and after peering in every direction and around its angles with great anxiety, he beckoned Hartley to come. "Mass' Henry," he whispered in a thick frightened voice, "Don' make no noise !"

"All right."

"Look roun' de cornah. Don' show you'sef."

Hartley looked. In front of the rock were bushes higher than a man's head, but growing on ground so much lower than that on which he stood that he could see over their tops. Beyond them he perceived, by the ruddy reflection of the firelight upon its surface, a stream of water ; and, looking between the tree stems for the cause of the light, he saw a bright fire with a circle of men and women surrounding it, some carelessly stretched out on the ground, some seated on stones, some swinging in hammocks between the trees. They were all in easy attitudes and a great good humor. A confused gabble arose from their mongrel conversation, and now and then a few lilting notes of a song were heard. All the while a guitar kept up an aimless tinkling mixed with the rattle of tinware from a table back of the fire, where several hag-like women were clearing away the supper. Over the fire there hung a great black iron kettle supported on a cross-pole resting in two forked stakes. The leaves above, reflecting the blaze of the fire in patches of red and of yellow light interspersed with deep shadows, made a beautiful though sombre ceiling. A dull red coal here and there in the semi-darkness revealed the position of some smoker. It was a wild, strong picture, framed by the blackness into which it faded.

Hartley was so taken up by the first *coup-d'œil* that he did not see anything more ; but after awhile he became

conscious of a semicircle of white houses, standing back from the fire, and showing dimly among the columnar tree trunks against a black background. The line extended from his left around toward the right, being lost behind a dark mass, which another look showed to be a house in shadow, the last of the row.

"Dere's de stairs I tole you 'bout," said Cato, pointing to the right. Hartley gazed in that direction and saw a wall rising up vertically some fifteen yards distant. As his eyes became accustomed to the darkness he made out a broad black fissure running up and down the wall and terminating in the slope of earth at its foot. "Dere's de cap'n's house—Cap'n Hackett," said Cato, pointing awfully to the dark building in front. "Nex' one's whar Mass' Dewhuss and his fokes is kep'. Nex' one's empty, and de nex' b'longs to de mates. All de four-room cabins belongs to de men."

"Cato," asked Hartley, "Can Miss Mary find me here?"

"Yes, sah, de ladies been hee-eh befo'. Dat man dere," indicating the locality with outstretched finger—"he's de guard."

"Where? I can't see him."

"Settin' down by dat tree—dere. He's smokin' a cigar. Don't you see the light, sah?" Hartley made out, finally, a man sitting in the shadow of a tree on the ground, about fifty yards away.

"Dat man's de guard," whispered Cato again. "His business to see dey don' run off. But he don' trouble de young ladies fo' he knows dat if they goes out alone dey can't git away. Dey don' know de country, an' dey' feard to leave Mass' Dewhuss."

Hartley told Cato to go and apprise Mary of his presence, and agree upon the place in which to meet him afterward. The servant, fearful of suspicion and detection, made Hartley promise not to keep Miss Mary more than fifteen minutes at first, and then to wait an hour for a second visit from her. When that was over he would rejoin

him, take him to the cove in the Cobre where the canoe lay, and put him back on board the ship. Hartley acquiesced in this plan, though secretly hoping for an opportunity to get the whole Dewhurst family away with him.

Cato left him, with many injunctions to care, and crawled away through the bushes as he had come. In a few minutes Hartley saw him reappear, walking with a charming innocence toward the fire, and whistling "Ole Virginny." It was the signal. He again forgot peril, escape, and all the world but one, and his heart throbbed with uncontrolled and tumultuous agitation, as he watched around the angle of the rock the place where he expected her to appear. Scarcely could he in his eagerness keep from an undue risking of himself. "Ah, will she come? can she be so near! Can she be coming? My love, my darling! I shall see her—perhaps she is coming now! Why doesn't she come?" So he thought, his soul seeming to flow out toward her in an ecstatic current of affection.

Isabel suddenly came in sight, walking around the corner of the captain's house rapidly, and straight toward him, followed by Mary. His heart stood still. "At last, at last," was the only thought that found space along with the welling gush of joy.

Though it was now quite dark, the fire gave light enough to show that Isabel came steadily onward, holding her head down as if unconcerned, while Mary walked with a hurried, halting step, and seemed to be trying to look into the gloom before her.

The two girls reached the brook, sprang over at a narrow place, and walked into the bushes in the direction of the rock. They advanced to its very foot, pausing out of Hartley's sight.

He had by this time somewhat recovered himself, and was starting to meet them, heedless of all dangers. But even then, when he could no longer think for himself, he thought for her. Fearing to surprise her too much by an unexpected apparition, he stopped abruptly, and softly

hummed the first line of the air he had heard her sing in the garden in Santa Cruz.

“Bee in the deep flower-bell.”

He heard Mary's slight exclamation, and rushing around the base of the rock, sprang down on the lower ground. There in the darkness he found her. There was no shyness or coldness then. Mary knew she loved him, heart and soul; her perversity and her scrupulosity were all gone. She was almost as much overjoyed as he was; and when he came forward, she opened her arms to him, accepting his kisses and returning his embrace in the most natural manner in the world, with never a thought about the proprieties. Isabel discreetly turned her head, too delicate even there to watch their joy, but she could not help hearing it. At first their delight had no words, but their *enfantillages* began soon enough. She found herself thinking that though it was soft, it was very sweet, the reunion of this loving couple.

“Short their words and long their kisses,
And their hearts were overflowing.”

Hartley did not think of her, until Mary whispered, “Speak to Bell, Henry.” Then he turned to her, and taking her hand replied to her murmur of welcome by kissing her cheek, with the most matter of fact assurance. Neither did she oppose him. As the parting and separation, and the strange unforeseen meeting among dangers had made him and Mary almost as husband and wife, so it had made him and Isabel seem to each other as brother and sister. She felt a pleasure in his greeting, and inwardly she wished “O that thou wert my brother!” With all her coolness and reserve, she had a considerable regard for this young man, who was so spontaneous, so impulsive, so different from herself. She felt herself vastly older than he, even then, while depending on him to act for her.

Hartley led the two girls around the rock into a more

obscured concealment. Isabel posted herself to keep watch, while Hartley and Mary stood so near her that they all talked together. They spent a few minutes in hurried explanations of past movements, and of the events which had thus united them. While Mary listened to her lover's story, and thought of his present situation, she trembled at the risk he had run and had still to undergo; and she thrilled with a woman's pride, at his daring so much for her sake. The girls told him how they had seen the pirates' preparations for resistance, and had heard the firing and shouting of the fight; how their hearts sunk when the gang returned triumphing; and how full of apprehension they had been in listening to the loud boastings of slaughter, and especially in hearing Hackett's cool recital of the death of an officer.

"Oh, Henry," said Mary, "I thought it might be you; and I was so wretched till that good Cato came."

Then Hartley asked about Cato, and found that the Dewhurst family were all, like himself, looking upon the servant as a friend.

Their time had already elapsed, and Hartley thought they ought to go, lest a longer absence might be remarked. He told them so, and arranged for them to return in an hour. "Now," said he, "tell Mr. Dewhurst about this—not a word to Mrs. Dewhurst, mind—and get his ideas. If you can possibly get out of this glen, Cato will guide us to a canoe he told me about; and we may get out of the river to-night, and be aboard the Fish to-morrow morning."

"There are the stairs," said Isabel, leaving her post a minute. "We are not very closely watched. Perhaps we can get out of our back windows and escape that way."

"That looks possible," said Hartley, "or a better way may suggest itself. Remind Mr. Dewhurst that in a pinch a good bribe might silence any one man who discovered you. But are you and Mary going to have courage? Won't you be scared? Can you stand it?"

"Yes," said both. Isabel, went on, "Aunt will be the trouble—she will be frightened."

"You may have to deceive her," said Hartley. "At least, to make her think there is no danger. When you come back you can bring me Mr. Dewhurst's idea, and we will make our plans. You must go now."

All this while there had been nothing to alarm them from the gang about the fire, which was a quiet party for the evening after a victory. They sat, and lounged, and smoked, and sang, and once in awhile a couple danced a little; but there was no drinking and no boisterousness. The girls had said good-by, Mary with a long and clinging tenderness as though it might be the last time, and Isabel with a serene cordiality good for ruffled nerves, and they had started away, when a noise arose from about the fire. A hoarse rough voice was heard giving orders, and there seemed by the sounds from the men and women to be a confusion of some kind. Mary and Isabel ran back behind the rock again, in fear, and joined Hartley, who was already looking for the cause of the disturbance.

Near the fire stood Big Ben, with a paper in his hand, alternately calling names from it and giving directions. As each name was called there would be a reply, either from a little group of men on the left and nearer, or from some one among those still by the fire. The party on the left was armed, as could be seen by the glistening of weapons. As others answered the muster, they would rise, and walk rapidly away toward the houses, and some could already be seen returning with their guns. The women stayed by the fire, calling shrilly to the men in the group and laughing. As near as Hartley could make out there was a coarse joke flying around about cruisers robbing them of their lovers for the night. Captain Hackett was at hand, overseeing the work but taking no active part.

Markley stopped his muster after having called about twenty-five names, and before very long the last loiterer had approached out of the ring of darkness and had fallen

into the group. Hackett drew near Big Ben and gave some orders which could not be heard. The second mate shouldered a musket, and calling, "Come on, boys!" started down the glen, followed by the armed party strung along in two and threes, and all silent. They passed with sure footsteps into the undergrowth twenty yards to the left of where Hartley and the girls were hidden; and their march could be followed for some time by the splashing of their bare feet in the water as they descended the stream. When they were gone Hackett came down to his house and entered it.

All of this had occupied ten minutes more. The girls again said farewell and essayed to start, Hartley taking his place to watch them, when they all three heard a keen little whistle to the left among the bushes. The next minute Big Ben appeared, without his musket, walking in a stooping posture within the fringe of undergrowth that bordered the clear space of the glen, and moving in such a direction as to pass within five or six yards of our party. He evidently sought concealment while waiting for some one else. Mary and Isabel, again seeking the shelter of the rock, watched from its security his curious movements. When just in front of them, he stopped, turned toward the captain's house, and waited. Directly Arrowson appeared, walking softly that way. Markley gave another low whistle, and Arrowson came to him at once. "Well, he growled.

"Are they gone yet?" asked Markley, in a low, excited voice.

"No; Tony says not."

"I'm afraid this 'll make a row," said Markley.

"Too late to think o' that. You got me into it, and I'm goin' to see it through," answered Arrowson, in a loud, reckless manner.

"Ssh! Don't speak so loud. Cap'n's gal might hear you! *They* might hear you." Then there followed further conversation in a lower voice, which was inaudible, and

finally the two men were silent and stood still, apparently waiting.

Hartley whispered a question to Isabel, if she were afraid to pass the mates. She replied that Hackett had given strict orders, and that no one ever spoke to Mary and her. He told them, thereupon, to go quietly in, and they started.

He was somewhat anxious on account of the two mates, but having inferred from the talk he had overheard, that they were waiting to be joined by others, he thought best to send the girls away while the party of enemies was small. Beside, they had been absent from their house a long time, and he feared they might be missed.

He watched them as they glided through the bushes, making a detour to avoid the mates, and not speaking a word. All at once the men saw them, and started toward them at a fast walk. The girls heard the men approaching, and began to run, at which the mates suddenly dashed forward to intercept their flight. Markley caught Isabel and held her. Arrowson rushed at Mary, but was not quick enough, for she darted ahead of him, and his hand closed on air, while she ran on, as fleet as a doe, toward the captain's house. Before he could turn to pursue her, she had sprung over the brook without a pause, but though she was now so far ahead, and was screaming wildly, he continued to chase her. Meanwhile Isabel was frantically struggling with Markley.

All of this passed in a very few seconds, event succeeding event, as if all had been arranged beforehand. When Hartley saw the mates rush at the girls, he sprang forward, with a generous self-forgetfulness, to the rescue. As he alighted from his leap off the shelf above, his foot struck a loose stone, which turned and threw him down. While falling, he remembered that he was unarmed, and as he arose, he snatched up the stone. Again he dashed forward, directing himself toward the spot where Markley had seized Isabel. He came upon them, and saw the

reason of her silence. Markley had stuffed a part of her dress into her mouth, and held it there securely with one brawny hand. He did not see or hear Hartley's approach. The furious young man swung the stone at full arm's length, with all his strength, and brought it down on the back of the mate's head. It struck with a dull thud, and Markley relaxed his grasp and dropped like a bullock. Hartley, seizing Isabel's hand, half dragged, half carried her back to the rock, where she sunk to the ground almost fainting. Leaving her, he sprang upon the ledge and looked around.

Mary was gone. Captain Hackett stood at the corner of his house, holding Arrowson by the collar, and cursing him. The mate seeming remarkably meek under the treatment. Hartley took in the situation, and quickly went to Isabel. He found her recovering, and crying bitterly and quietly, as if her heart would break.

"Dear Bell," said he tenderly. "Don't cry. Nobody knows about it but me, and I shall not tell. I killed him, Isabel," he added, with his voice suddenly becoming very stern. Then he told her to say that Markley had fallen backward against a stone, and assuring her that she was now safe, urged her to go to the house. She rose and walked away with sufficient readiness to show that she needed no help; but Hartley followed her until she passed the spot where Markley lay. He heard Ben groaning, which showed that the rascal was alive after all; and he hurried back to his lookout rock, wondering if the mate would suspect how the injury had come.

From the rock Hartley watched Isabel walk steadily across the open ground toward the captain, who still held Arrowson, and poured out upon him the vials of profane wrath.

"You ——, —— you! Do you know what that is? You dirty dog! You ——! You know a pistil when you see it, do you? You ——! I've got a —— good notion to put a bullet through your —— heart! You go to dis-

obeyin' me, do you? You —— ! Interferin' with my women prisoners ! You —— ! ”

Hackett caught sight of Isabel.

“ You, too, Miss Bell ! ” he exclaimed ; “ who was it ? ”

“ Your second mate,” she answered, in a firm cold voice, that Hartley could plainly hear.

“ Where is the dog ? ” roared Hackett.

“ He is lying in the bushes. He got hurt,” answered Isabel.

“ The beast ! I hope he's killed. He's no mate o' mine any more. You go to your house, Miss Bell—here's your pa comin' now. I'll see you ain't troubled no more. I know good company when I see it,” here Hackett first noticed the crowd, male and female, who, attracted by the fracas, had gathered around. “ Go to your quarters ! and stay there ! ” he roared. He was obeyed with surprising celerity. Hackett renewed his attentions to Arrowson at this, and continued his maledictions with no sign of exhaustion.

In the meantime Markley had recovered, and apparently thinking it best to have his difficulty out at once, rose and started toward his commander. Hartley watched him pass through the bushes and heard the fresh volley of abuse with which he was met when Hackett espied him coming. Without letting go of Arrowson he rained curses upon Markley. Suddenly he stopped. “ Go in my house, the pair o' ye ! ” he ordered. They obeyed ; and Hackett following closed the door with a bang. In a minute a light shone out of a back window upon foliage behind the house, as though some one had brought a lamp from an inner room. Then all was quiet.

Hartley was excited by the events of the last few minutes to a point beyond the recollection of prudence, and a sudden curiosity seized him to know what was going on in the house. He acted on his impulse. It was easy to reach unperceived the edge of the low bushes which grew nearly up to the brook, and from there it was but a few yards

across the open space to the captain's house. The light through the window shone on a mat of tangled vines and plants which grew with tropical luxuriance up to the back of the house. If he could reach that shelter he might lie as near the window as he pleased, and hear all that went on within. He cast a hasty glance around, saw that the coast was clear, and springing over the brook lay down and crawled across to the corner of the house. He found that instead of having vegetation close up to its wall, a narrow space had been kept clear, forming a kind of path behind the house. From where he lay he could hear the talk within, but not distinctly enough to do more than pique his curiosity. Besides, in that place, he was not at all concealed. So he directed himself to a spot a little further off where it seemed possible to make an entrance into the thicket. Crawling in slowly and painfully, avoiding to rest his weight on a twig, or rustle a leaf, or even to breathe aloud, he found himself after awhile within a few feet of the window, hidden under vines so closely intertwined that the light hardly reached him, and with every word pronounced in the house clearly audible to his ears. He could see into the room through openings in the leaves, but the speakers were invisible. He listened acutely.

Hackett seemed to be having it all to himself still. "And trusted you, Benjamin Markley, in every way," he was saying. "I just put myself in your hands, I may say, and give you an officer's shear, expectin' an officer's work out o' you and to put dependence on to you as an officer. And how do you pay me? You drink like a hog, so I'm never easy to leave you the schooner's deck at sea; and you're lazy and won't half do the work I set you; and you pick fights with weakly men; and you disobey my orders! No! shut up! it's not the first time, and you know it, and I know'd it all along. You run the schooner off the course I give and nigh lost her, when you were fetching her down from York. That's once before, anyhow. Never mind, Arrowson. I know you was not to blame for that—beyond

not tellin' me of it. That's once anyhow, and I know of every other time."

"Do you think I've got no friends among men I've done so much for?"

"I never took no notice at the time, 'cause I hoped for better from you. You've had fair treatment from me in every fashion, and you know it—and this is the way you pay me!—leavin' your command to look out for itself, at sech a time as this!—and me expectin' them boats in again, as like as not!—and sneakin' off through the brush to attack a woman!—a girl I had ordered you to keep clear of!

"You go join the watch, and tend to your dooty. And let me tell you neow, once for all, the very next time you disobey my orders, you'll stop bein' my second mate, and all the discharge you'll get will be a bullet through your carcass. Go!"

Hartley heard the retreating footsteps of Markley, who departed without attempting to make a reply. Hackett was silent for a minute or two and then resumed:

"Jeames Arrowson, I don't know what to say to you. It's a wonder I didn't shoot you to-night. I was mad enough. I have sailed too long with you, Jeames, to expect you to act like this. Markley's nothin' but a dog, and I never vallied him much; but you are a smart man, Jeames. You know I am not to be fooled with, for we've sailed together a long time; and you know I'm doin' the best I can for you all the time, and dependin' on you like my right hand. And you know 's well 's I do, a business like ours can't thrive without hevin' one man to the head and obeyin' of him. And you know the cruisers are beginnin' to press us neow, and we've got to keep still awhile. It won't pay neow to go after the girls we got—and these here women are big bugs, and if anythin' goes wrong with 'em it 'll make sech a stir in the States, they'll send deown the hull navy to break us out. We've jest got

to hold on and keep still neow till the sea goes down. Don't you know it?"

Arrowson muttered a gruff assent.

"Wa-a-a-l, that's what makes it so hard to tell how to take you. Neow, Jeames, there's been s'thin', I do' no what, between you and me for a good while, and I want to clear it up. I want good feelin' again, and I want to feel you're backin' me up, like you used to."

"I don't know of no trouble between us, cap, hafore this," said Arrowson. "I 'ave been 'uffy may'ap, sometimes, but there's no 'ard feelin'."

"I'm tarnation glad to hear you say so," replied Hackett.

"I wanted to let you know 'ow me an Ben come to go hafter them gals. Ben put me hup to it first, tellin' me that the big one was throwin' sheeps' heyes hafter 'im. I laughed at 'im, but I took notice, and—it was so, cap. And the little one was a watchin' o' me in the same fashion. We thought if they was willin', it was hall right, and you wouldn't care. And what's more, if they 'ad been took separate, there would 'a been no row. Hof course, wen together, they made a fight for it."

The scoundrel was evidently sincere in his belief. Hartley could scarcely restrain his anger, and even Hackett did not seem pleased.

"Pshaw!" said he, "that's all a humbug."

"I tell you it's no 'umbug," retorted Arrowson. "I don't see hany reason why I musn't 'ave the little gal. She's willin'. I'll pay the ransom for 'er, and the old cove'll be too 'appy to get hisself hoff with a 'ole 'ide to make hany row."

"There's no use talkin' abaout it," said Hackett decidedly. "You're on the wrong tack, Jeames; she cares nothin' for you, and she's got to go home. I know you would 'a paid for her fair and square, and she might 'a liked you well enough after a bit, like some others in the quarters neow; but I tell you, Jeames, you mustn't think

about it. How could you manage Juliette if you had her, too? And you know it's agin' rules for any man to have mor'n one woman at the quarters."

"I don't want to keep her here, and I would manage Juliette for myself," persisted the mate.

"No use, Jeames. The old uns 'ud make too much row."

"Why not stick 'em?" asked Arrowson, coolly.

"Jeames, it's no use. Your idears and mine are different, and you depend on't, mine'll fetch you out better in the long run."

"Maybe so," growled Arrowson.

"They will, depend upon it. Neow, Jeames, I don't want no hard feelin's. Let bygones be bygones, and if any of the men come pryin' around, wantin' to know what was the matter, jest tell 'em to mind their own business."

"Aye, aye. It's all right, cap," replied the mate. Neither spoke again for a few minutes, when Arrowson got up, and remarked that he would go and turn in.

"Wa-a-a-l, good-night, Jeames, there's no grudge, recollect."

"All right, cap," replied the mate, moving away.

Hartley observed in the captain's tone toward Arrowson, a kind of conciliating deceit, and in the whole talk he detected mistrust, in spite of apparent agreement. Hackett arose when Arrowson departed, and remained standing in the middle of the floor. When the mate's footsteps had died away, he soliloquized.

"The dog! he would like nothin' better 'n to kill me in my bed. It's a good thing for me he's afraid of me—and better that I keep my eye open to windward. I guess I fooled him some to-night. Catareeny!" he called.

"Here I am, John," replied a very sweet and plaintive voice, in Spanish. "Do you wish anything?"

Hartley heard the opening of a door, as from an inner room.

Hackett replied in Spanish. "Do not look so sad, Catarina, you are not the first woman who ever bore a child."

"I am not sorrowful, John; you love me too much."

"Yes, I do love you, my little wife; but why do you look so sorrowful?"

"I am afraid," she hesitatingly replied.

"Do not be afraid," he said. "I will stay with you, and you will be happy when you see your baby—won't you!"

"Yes, John. Where are you going?"

"I am going to inspect the quarters; I shall be back presently." He went out and closed the door behind him.

Hartley stole a glance at the window, and saw before him, like a picture, framed in its casing, the girl whom Hackett had called Catarina. She was very young, in appearance not over fifteen, tall and slender, and she had a peculiarly attractive face. At his first glance, the young lieutenant fell to pitying her. Her face was childish in every respect but one. It was round and smooth, with delicate features, large dark liquid eyes, and a soft olive skin, with color and peachy bloom on the cheeks. But in her countenance there was an expression of deep sadness, in painful contrast with its youth and loveliness. As she stood there Hartley saw at once, her form confirming what he had overheard, that she would soon be a mother.

She remained perfectly still, reflecting pensively, while the sorrowful look deepened. Presently she advanced to the window, and drawing up a chair, she rested her elbows on the sill and her face in her hands, and gazed out fixedly. Hartley heard her sigh once and again, and then she spoke in her low sad Spanish.

"Oh, Mother of God! Why must John keep me here?" She went on brokenly, frequently pausing.

"Oh, my mother! where are you? So long since John took me from you! Does he think I can forget? O, my father! Alas for me! Why must I stay among these people? He does not love me as I love him."

She paused in her broken monologue, and sung in a low, heart-weary tone.

“For love of thee, I lost the love of God;
For love of thee, I lost my own, you see;
And now I find myself alone, alone,
Without a hope in God, or love, or thee.”

The words turned into sobs as she closed.

“These hateful women! They say I am not married! They laugh at me! Ah, how I hate them when they laugh. Juliette called me *La Hembrilla*. I would send her far, far away if I could—no, I would go away with John—far away to my sweet little mother. Alas for me! alas for me! how can I bear it? Ay, *Madre de Díos! Madre de Díos!*”

The poor girl burst into a passionate fit of weeping, and sobbed as if her heart would break, all the while uttering unintelligible words. After awhile she very suddenly stopped, and saying to herself that John must not hear her cry, dried her tears. She kept her place at the window, still gazing out at nothing.

Until now Hartley had had scarcely time to think of his own conduct. He had been pushed by situations demanding quick decision, and all his spare moments had been filled with his delight and his danger. The sensation of smallness and meanness which came over him now to find himself an eavesdropper upon this girl, who seemed pure and pitiable, made him think of where he was. “What am I doing here, in the night, hidden and listening?” he asked himself. “Trying to get Mary away into safety—anything is allowable for that,” he answered himself. “Yes, but would these fellows make any allowance if they found me? They would say I had no business here—by heavens! they would call me a spy! A spy! I am nothing else. No—my prime object was to rescue Mary. But I did come to get information, too; and I have been crawling, and creeping, and sneaking, and hiding, ever since

dark. Pah! Suppose I get back to the ship. How can I tell the captain and my messmates? What will they think of me?"

His reflections were suddenly brought to an end by a slight startled exclamation from the girl at the window. At first he thought she had seen him, but he was soon relieved of that delusion by hearing her low question in broken English, "Dat you, Jackson?" and a reply from a third person who had approached unseen and unheard by the narrow path at the back of the house.

"Yes 'um," answered a cautious voice. "Peters is with me. Capen's orders for us to come. Put the light in the other room, mum, and shet the winder in there."

The girl obeyed and soon returned. "You come so still I no hear you," she whispered. "What for capten want you?"

"Do'no, 'm."

"He back right away?"

"Yes'm. He's lookin' around to see that these devils ain't hatchin' no mischief, and there ain't no body a-spyin' on him."

Hartley shivered at the word spy. He began to feel uneasy lest Mary and Isabel might go to the rendezvous and find him absent; for the time that had elapsed since he had parted from them seemed to him longer than it really was, because it had been filled with incidents of a kind to make time long. Beside, he was stiff and sore, weary of his constrained position, fatigued beyond anything he had ever felt before. But there was no getting away yet; he had no choice but to lie still and to listen.

The two men waited without further word or motion until they heard the captain returning, when they moved up to the window, one on each side. Hackett entered the house, shut the door carefully, walked to the middle of the room, and asked in a commonplace tone. "Ten o'clock, Catareeny?" "Eleven," replied the man she had called Jackson. It was a signal apparently, for Hackett, without

farther hesitation went to the window and sat down. "Who's with you?" he asked. One man replied, "Jackson," the other, "Peters." "Right. Anybody see you sence you got back." "No—"

"That's good. Come close, men, and listen sharp. The mates have no idea that you are my partners instead of them. I fooled Arrowson bad to-night—made him think I was tarnation anxious to be friends with him again. He's an ugly devil, though, and he'll stab me in the back or shoot me unawares before long unless I clear out. And he don't love you neither.

"Wa-a-l, men, I'm ready to quit. Come here, Catareeny, I want you to hear every word o' this. I'm goin' to take Catareeny and leave this—pshaw, gal! there—let go! Arrowson's welcome to the gang if he wants it, but he shan't have the schooner, and he shan't—have—you know what. Counting what's buried, and what's in the bank in Orleans, there be a cool fifty thousand a piece for you two. And you've earned it, too—I should never have got along with these devils without your keepin' me so well posted.

"Wa-a-a-l, let's get to business. No time to lose now. Take the short road to the P'int and travel fast. Go to the right, and strike the beach at the open—'bout half-way—you know. Look out you don't go past the dry creek in the dark. The canoe's in the old place. The spades and paddles are hid altogether in the grass, behind the big log. You'll find 'em easy enough—they ain't two foot from the log. There won't be a mite o' surf to-night." Hartley had heard every word of the low monotonous talk. It was getting interesting. The captain went on almost in a whisper, but still audibly. "Dig it up, and take box and all. Now mind. There's two sharp-p'inted rocks lays close in shore on the east side o' the key—so close in you can see 'em by the starlight. When you find them, strike back toward the middle o' the key, and you'll come not fifty yards from the beach to three mounds. The north one is the biggest, and it rises to a peak, like, and it hain't

no grass on it. Put the box under again, on the very tip-top of it—three foot's deep enough—and slick it up, and git away. Put the paddles and spades and the boat, all jest as you found 'em. You can get that done by day, if you push, and you'd better lose no time. The cruiser's off the coast; look out she don't see you. When you get done, go over to Olozaga, as I told you, and tend to that business with the priest. Then come back and let me know."

The man named Peters here spoke up in a dissatisfied manner. "How will we be better off when we shift the box than we are now, cap? There'll be no better chance to get it away then than we've already got."

"Wa-a-a-l, Peters, I have been a mind to let you and Jackson in my plans for a good spell, and neow I calc'late I better. In the first place, our lives ain't safe here, as you know. The gang don't look up to me like it used to. Arrowson has tampered with the men—and the women too, for that matter—till I can't count certain on over twelve or fourteen, besides you two. Some day the treacherous hounds will knock us all in the head, for the sake of dividin' amongst fewer, and so as to live freer 'n I let 'em. I ain't a goin' to wait for that time. I reckon some night before very long, little Catareeny there will slip down the creek, and find the schooner's anchor up and sail made; and we'll jest go off together to Orleans, and sell the boat, and draw out the money in bank, and divide up."

"But how about the box, cap?" insisted Peters.

"You don't give me time to get to that. When we get rid of the men that go with us, you and me will hire a tradin' vessel, and ship a new crew all round, and come back here and get it. We can't take it now; every man jack aboard would want a shear; and that would whittle our pile down tarnation small."

"The cap'n's right," said Jackson briefly.

Peters assented.

Hackett went on, "Now men, you know why I'm in

such a darned hurry for you to get back from Olozaga. I want you to have enough of our men bespoke to work the schooner, and be ready to go at a minute's notice. You understand."

"Yes."

"Now start, and make time. You've been here too long already. Good-luck."

The two men were going, when Jackson turned back once more. "Cap," said he, "there was something queer about that fracas to-night. Me and Peters was hid in the brush by the stairs, and them gals was out there in the bushes off the end o' your house, for better'n half an hour. We couldn't see nothin', but we thought we heard 'em talkin' to somebody. And Ben never fell and hurt hisself. Somebody done it for him, and he's too big a fool to know it, or else he's 'shamed to tell."

"Anythin' else?"

"No."

"Wa-a-a-l—glad you told me. I'll keep my eye skinned. Start now, boys—no time to lose. Be keerful till you are fairly off." The men disappeared in the same imperceptible soundless manner in which they had come.

Hackett kept his seat by the window while Hartley fervently wished he would go. In spite of the treasure-trove, he could not help aching with fatigue and chilling with damp, and the last piece of news he had gained from the informer's words mingled strong apprehensions with his exultation. He thought he must have lain in his lair for two hours, though it was less than one, and he figured in his imagination the girls waiting in dread behind the rock and wondering why he did not come. Beside, and worse than all the rest, there clung in his mind a haunting phantom even when other thoughts were prominent or when he was giving his attention to the words in his ears, a constant memory that he was degrading himself by espionage. As he lay there his sense of humiliation had grown so

strong that he vowed to himself to make it a lesson of his life, if further life were vouchsafed.

Hackett called. "Come closer, Catarina, come sit in my lap." Hartley heard her dress rustle as she made the change, then came the sound of a kiss. "Whose little baby is it?" said Hackett, with a wonderful tenderness in his hard voice, and forgetting his Spanish. "Who loves little Reeny?" he asked.

The girl cooed a little reply in soft Spanish, as contented and happy to the ear as the purring of a kitten; and she seemed to be caressing her rough lover.

For a little while they did not speak; then Hackett broke the silence. "How do you like the idear of leavin' this place, Reeny?"

"O, so much. I cannot tell you."

"I know'd you'd be glad of it," he said; "I'm glad to get away myself. In one week more I hope to have you out o' this and on blue water, and you'll never see no such times again." Then he went on and explained to her how he happened to be engaged in his lawless calling. He told her that when he was still almost a boy, seventeen years before, he had been captured by pirates and forced to become a pirate himself to save his life. He dwelt somewhat upon the great value which his hard early life had taught him to put upon money, and gave this as his reason for adhering to the new business. He "saw there was money in it." Then, as his conscience revolted against the cruelties, he gradually formed a scheme to raise himself to rank among the buccaneers, and to ameliorate the harsh features of the pursuit, at the same time that he rolled up his own fortune. He concluded by saying that, except the ransom system, which he had got pretty thoroughly introduced, he had failed. That did good, but in everything else his efforts had been resultless. He had not made the great amount of money he expected, and he saw that pirates could not be improved. His own gang was ready to cut his throat for holding them in restraint. He meant to go away and live

somewhere else, and have a good time. When he had finished this eccentric account, he waited for a reply, but Catarina did not speak.

"Ain't you glad to get away so soon, Reeny?" asked he.

"Yes, John." There was a touch of plaintiveness in her voice again.

"Come, cheer up, little kitten," said he, jocosely. "Don't be so scared about the baby. 'Twon't amount to much, I reckon."

The girl hesitated, then answered with a solemnity strange in one so young. "John, I must speak. You have deceived me, and I have deceived you. I am not frightened. I do not fear because of our child. I know that you have never married me—I am not your wife—I am like Juliette. Wait!—there is worse. It is five years since you took me from my mother and father, but I have not forgotten. Ah, if I could only be with my mother." She began a silent weeping, her sobs only just audible to the listener outside.

Hackett seemed very much moved by her grief, judging from his disconnected exclamations. "By thunder! I s'posed you'd forget all about it. Don't cry, gal. I didn't think you'd care. Don't take on so, Reeny. Stop and listen, and I'll tell you what I'll do." The sobbing ceased. "I have been thinkin' about it for some time, and I have about come to the conclusion it'll be the best thing for us to get married. The padre in Olozaga 'll do it for me. And see here, Reeny, if you do really care about seein' your ma and pa, I know where they live, and I'll take you there after we are spliced—maybe in time for your baby to be born to hum—it's a month yet, ain't it?"

The only reply which could at first be heard, was the sound of the kisses which she showered upon him. "There, Reeny, don't smother me—there, that'll do now," said Hackett good-naturedly. Then she began to worship him, and bless him, and in every tone of her voice, she showed the gladness of her heart. "Come, Reeny," said he; "we better turn in. It's right late."

Hartley heard the sound of their steps, and the opening of a door, and saw on the ceiling the reflection of the light from the inner room. The door closed, the light disappeared, and he was at last at liberty.

Immediately, he began to turn himself around in his narrow bed. So stiff was he with the long protracted inaction, that at first it gave him pain to move, and his limbs would hardly obey him; but disregarding that, he worked his way out of the thicket, through the track by which he had entered. Once out, he sat up in the edge of the bushes, took off his coat, turned it, and put it on properly. "There," he said to himself, "buttons or no-buttons, that looks less like a sneak." Then he sat still to consider. What he had heard made him cautious.

The camp-fire was still burning, but it was now very low, and its light was so small that he did not think he would run any great risk in crossing the open space between himself and the brook, in the same manner as before. He commenced to work along, lying flat on his breast. But when about half-way across, he heard a light sound of footsteps, and of rustling leaves before him. He looked quickly. Two female figures, which at second glance he recognized as that of Mary and Isabel, were approaching through the undergrowth. They had come so quietly that he had not heard them until they were almost at the edge of the bushes. He saw that they would pass within a few feet of him, and knew that they would be likely in their nervousness, to give an alarm which would draw some of the pirates in that direction. He had not much time in which to choose a course of action. He adopted the most obvious plan. Rising to his feet he walked swiftly toward the girls, calling to them as he drew near, in a low but distinct voice.

They had just reached the brook when they heard him, and Mary had drawn back to spring over. At his call she recoiled still further, and uttered a little cry; but Isabel, ever courageous and self-possessed, knew him at

once, and hushed her cousin speedily. Hartley joined them, and drawing them back a few feet, threw himself behind some shrubs, the first beginnings of the undergrowth, just there not over a foot high.

"Sit down where you are," said he. "I'm afraid the look out has noticed your voice, Mary, and it is better for you and Isabel to stay in sight now. If he comes to look he may think you two are only sitting out here to talk together. Isabel, tell me what Mr. Dewhurst says."

"He can think of no better plan than you suggested—getting out of the back window. The watchman Antonio appears to be asleep. Cato will help us out and guide us to the stairs. Aunt thinks we are only going to a town in the country, and has promised to be brave. She doesn't know you are with us."

"What am *I* to do?" asked Hartley.

"Make your way up the stairs and wait somewhere near the top till we come." Hartley was about to question further, when Mary gave a terrified whisper, "Hush!" The figure of a man appeared between them and the fire walking leisurely toward them. "Antonio," whispered Isabel, and then with a considerable presence of mind she pretended to draw Mary's attention to the stars overhead. Mary arched her neck and gazed, but could not trust herself to speak.

Isabel could think of only one constellation—one which Mary had showed her some time before as Mr. Garnet's favorite. "Alpha Lyra?" "Yes. They call it the Lyre, Mary, but I can't see any resemblance. Perhaps it would look like one if we had a telescope. There it is—that bright star. Right there—don't you see? Well, look right there, now. The three stars that make a triangle—they are pretty close to each other—and Alpha—"

By this time the man had reached the brook and stopped—Isabel ceased her amateur harping on the beautiful constellation, and asked in a dignified manner, "What do you want?"

The man replied in broken English, "Nothing. The young ladies stay out late. You will get sick." Then turning about, he walked off in the same leisurely way.

Isabel tried to talk again, but made a lame effort, for she, as well as Hartley and Mary, was intensely watching the motions of the lookout. They all felt that there was something cat-like and treacherous about him. He went to the door of Hackett's house, opened it without knocking and walked in.

"That's a bad sign," said Hartley. "Sit still, girls. If you move now it would look suspicious. I'll try to get away." He began to creep away, and Isabel resumed her talk about the stars.

In a minute Hackett came running out of his house with Antonio following him, and they came over toward the girls. Hartley had got about fifteen feet away, so far in the undergrowth that he was expecting to get off without further trouble, when he heard Isabel give a quiet little cough. He stopped and lay still.

Hackett's sharp voice was the next thing he heard. "Good evenin', Miss Mary! Good evenin', Miss Bell! All alone, eh?"

Isabel merely answered, "Good evening. Captain Hackett."

"You are stayin' out late. I should think you'd be afraid, after what happened to-night."

"No," replied Isabel. "You forget you promised us we should not be molested again. We are depending on your word, captain."

"That's generally a pretty good dependence, too, if I do say it myself; but you better not risk yourself out o' my sight or your pa's, specially in the night time. Besides it's unhealthy out o' doors here at night. I expect you better go in."

The girls took this broad hint, and rising to their feet prepared to depart. "Help me over, captain, please," asked Isabel, pausing before the ridiculous little brook, and

holding out her hand for assistance. He gallantly aided her and turned to assist Mary, but she was already across. Hartley was taking advantage of Isabel's delays to get a little further off.

"Wa-a-a-l," drawled Hackett, "good evenin'." Isabel still lingered, however, anxious to give Hartley one more chance. "Why, captain," she said coquettishly, "you surely are not going to let us walk back alone after giving us such a fright. That's not so polite as I thought you were. You said you knew good company when you saw it." The indomitable girl actually laughed a merry natural laugh.

"Business before pleasure," returned Hackett, dryly. He added, in a tone of authority Isabel did not dare to disobey, "You and Miss Mary go into your house right away."

They started in obedience to the command, while Hackett advancing, went into the bushes with Antonio. The two commenced a search, beating across the ground like a pair of bird dogs. Hartley lay perfectly still, listening to the rustling and to the drumming of his heart. It was so dark that he hoped to be passed by unseen, thus obtaining one more opportunity to slip away further while they were searching the ground beyond him. With only this desperate hope he waited. Hackett's turns were too short and quick to let him move.

But the last hope was vain. Hackett came nearer and nearer at every moment, and finally, without having seen him at all, stumbled over his body and fell down. Hartley sprung up, but Hackett was as quick as he. The two men rushed together without a word, Hartley clutching the pirate's throat and trying to trip him, Hackett trying to master his opponent's wrists. For a moment only, each kept to the first attempt. Then Hackett grappled the agile lieutenant around the body, and put all his strength into an effort to throw him down. Hartley was too quick, frustrating his adversary, and at the same time taking a wrestler's grip himself.

Then the two began to tug and strain. Hackett was too

powerful for Hartley's fierce attempts to avail; Hartley was so nimble that he evaded strength by activity and supple turnings. Suddenly he felt a new grasp, however. The man Antonio, coming up behind, had seized him around the body, pinioning both arms in his embrace. Hackett let go his hold, and Hartley heard next the click of a pistol-lock and a stern summons to surrender. Feeling at once the uselessness of further struggle against such a potent advantage, he remained quiet, relaxing his muscles.

"Do you give it up?" asked Hackett.

"Yes," was the sober reply.

"It's good for you, you do," his captor grimly remarked.

"Who are you?"

"Lieutenant Hartley, of the Flying Fish."

"What are you doing here?"

"I was left in the water for dead after the fight; and I swam ashore, and followed your men up the creek."

"What are you hanging about here for?—never mind now though. Come along!"

Antonio led the little procession, then came Hartley following, and Hackett brought up the rear, pistol in hand. None of them had anything to say.

When they went around the corner of the captain's house, there stood the two girls, almost dead with fright. Mary seeing how Hartley was guarded, thought he was going to instant execution. She gave one great cry, threw herself upon her lover's breast, and began to beseech Hackett piteously to spare his life. "O, he wasn't to blame!" she begged, "indeed he wasn't!—he came to see me. O good captain, don't hurt him!—don't kill him!—it wasn't his fault!" And so she went on agonizedly.

"Sho!" thought Hackett. "That's what made her so glad to see the cruiser yesterday. Thought she was powerful interested."

Isabel, carried away by her own fears, and the infection of Mary's terrible contagious alarm, addressed her petitions also to Hackett, trying to explain that Hartley had come

because he was nearly drowned and starved. Hackett was outwardly as cool as ice, and perfectly unmoved by their supplications. He shrewdly noticed inconsistencies between the lieutenant's statement and Isabel's ready-made account for his presence, while waiting for an opportunity to speak. At the same time, he felt a lenient inclination toward the prisoner, for he judged from Mary's devotion that she was the only cause of his coming.

As soon as he got a chance to slip in a word he did so, short and sharp. "He shan't be hurt. Get away, ladies; let us move on. There'll be a crowd here in a minute."

Isabel stopped, satisfied at that, but Mary still hung on her lover's neck pleading for his life, and dumb to all sounds. Not till Hackett ordered her to fall back, and Isabel assured her that Hartley was safe, and Hartley himself urged her to let him go, did she relinquish her grasp. It must be avowed that Hartley did not like her intercession, beautiful as it was in its love and spirit of self-sacrifice. He did not feel any necessity for it: it hurt his dignity, and made him feel degraded in the eyes of his captor. His pride, revolting from the evening's concealment, had already made him resolve to die with decorum, and Mary's asking was as though he were begging for himself. It was a relief when she ceased.

As they moved on, Hackett spoke to Isabel, in a sarcastic tone. "Why, Miss Bell, I'm surprised you was willin' to leave such a fine beau, and ask me to fetch you in! I can't see into that."

She could not notice his raillery then. She and Mary walked along, one on each side of Hartley, until they reached their own door, which was but a few paces beyond.

Mary thought Henry would kiss her; but he merely said, "Good-night, Isabel; farewell, Mary," and strode off, leaving her looking wistfully after him from her threshold.

Hackett stopped at the next house, opened the door, and ordered Hartley to go in. He obeyed his captor, who entered after him and struck a light. Hartley looked at

the room. It was bare of ornament and of furniture, except that a single chair stood near the open window, and there was a candle on the shelf. In the back of the chair, near the seat, was a Yankee notion in the form of a pair of leathern handcuffs, fitted to buckle on, and firmly secured in their place. A similar but larger pair, evidently meant for anklets, were secured on the lower front round of the chair.

"Set down, and put your hands behind you," ordered Hackett. Hartley obeyed. "Put 'em on, Antone." The man Antonio went behind the chair, and buckled the pair of leathern cuffs close about Hartley's wrists. Then coming to the front, he did the same for the anklets, leaving the prisoner as helpless in his bonds as a baby. "I ain't got any place to put you to-night, or I'd give you a bed," said the captain. "Here, Antone, lend a hand to set him so he can lean his head back, if he wants a nap." The two picked up the chair, with Hartley in it, and put him down again by the window in such a position that he could lean his head back against its casing. Never before in his life had he felt such a profound humiliation. To be lifted about by such people, like so much helpless dead-weight, was almost too much for his proud spirit. But still he inclined his head and said :

"Thank you."

"You're welcome," replied Hackett. "I'll put you in a better place to-morrow. It's so late now you'll get along very well till day, I reckon."

"What time is it?" asked Hartley.

"Nigh midnight," was the answer.

"Good heavens!" thought Hartley, "is it possible that only eight hours ago I was in the ship? Can so much have happened in this little while?" and he went on with his reflections, which were too much mixed and confused to have yet taken a decided character for bitterness or gladness; all the while closely watching the movements of the two men.

Hackett was looking about uneasily as if afraid he had forgotten something. He went up to Hartley, felt of his fastenings, and satisfied himself they were secure. Then he spoke to the watchman. "Antone, you stay till Arrowson musters the relief at two bells, and tell him to put Mark on here. Look out for both houses. Take my pistol, and don't let this prisoner get away." Antonio took the weapon and went outside. The captain followed him to the door himself and looked out. On what little things do our lives and fortunes sometimes depend! Hackett turned once more and regarded his prisoner, whose head had sunk back with exhaustion against the window casing, while the light shone in his eyes. Perhaps it was humanity, perhaps the economical habit of early years unconsciously reviving; but for some reason he walked to the shelf on which sat the candle, took the light down and blew it out, replaced it carefully, and went away.

CHAPTER XXVI.

PROFOUND silence reigned over all, the darkness was deep, the air motionless. There was no noise of insects to vibrate on the ear, no sound from the surf, no rustling from pendulous leaves on drooping limbs. The night was asleep.

It was a time eminently fitted to induce and aid reflection in the waking mind; and certainly Hartley reflected. He pondered, at first confusedly; his thought gradually taking method and shape. A medley of remembrances, flashes of some of the evening's scenes returning, momentary kindlings of heat at recalling a past peril, sudden sinkings of despondency at the thought of his present situation and prospects, quick spasms of disgust at the

idea of his espionage, warm flushings of love and delight in recollecting Mary's welcome, her words, her kisses and embraces ; an expansive sensation of wealth in the knowledge of the secret burial-place of the pirates' treasure ; wonderings whether his shipmates were thinking of him, and devising a plan for his rescue ; regrets that at some point in the evening, he had not acted differently ; suspicions of Cato's fidelity ; grief at the failure of their hopes of escape ; presentiments of coming evil, and wild schemes for self-deliverance—all these filled his mind together, or in a quick succession, his thoughts changing with the rapidity and diversity of kaleidoscopic patterns. By and by his head became clearer ; and at last he suddenly brought himself up in his vagaries by an effort of will. Forcing himself to attention, he considered what had better be his conduct and line of defence, in case he should be accused, as he expected to be, of having played the spy. He went over the accidental circumstances which had thrown him into a position to make a choice whether to visit the camp or stay away, as well as the motives which had caused him to come. He asked himself whether he would have come without the attraction of Mary's presence among the pirates. Now that he was more at leisure, and calmer, he naturally began to take a view more favorable to himself. His reason told him that he could not rightly be called by the name his military conscience so much loathed. His conduct now appeared no such very blameworthy matter ; he even concluded he had a right to impart the accidental knowledge he had obtained to his superior officer. After reaching this state of mind, his course was plain. He would boldly declare that he had come to see his betrothed wife, calling upon Hackett to confirm the statement by examining Mr. Dewhurst and Mary herself ; and he would offer to pay a reasonable sum, to be set free with Mr. Dewhurst's family. He feared that if the pirates spared his life, their desires for secrecy would prevent them from granting him his freedom. Still, he was able to let this

matter drop without any great annoyance, and with a mind much more at ease.

Then he fell to wondering if there were no chance to get away, and to puzzling after some plan of escape. The man Antonio was not visible, and Hartley knew that he himself could not be seen in the darkness, even by a person looking directly where he sat. He tried vainly to slip his hands out of the leathern bonds. If he could do that he knew he could unbuckle the anklets and walk away; but he found that the wristlets fitted too closely to slip. The pliant leather clung to its place, and would not move. Giving up that attempt, he strove with all his strength to break, first one, and then the other, of the handcuffs. He pulled and strained till his eyes felt as if they would leap from their sockets, and his hands seemed to be coming off, and the chair creaked. Then he gave it up. They were stronger than he.

He yielded for a time, and leaned his head back on the casing of the window, thinking he would rest a little while. The fatigue of all the exertions he had made now asserted itself. His mind went pleasantly to its beloved familiar subject—Mary—and directly he was blissfully, peacefully sleeping.

Without knowing how long he had been asleep, or, in fact, realizing that he had lost himself at all, he gently awoke again. He was vaguely wondering what was the matter, and trying to recollect, when he was instantly brought back to the full possession of his faculties by feeling something cold and clammy for an instant pressed upon his cheek, and then drawn slowly backward. The sensation made him shiver all over. He quickly turned his head to see what it was, when he caught the sound of a low unmistakable warning “sh!” At that he held perfectly still, fearful of losing some advantage, and listening intently out of the window and front door at once. In a few minutes something light appeared before his face. It came closer, and he recognized the blade of a dirk knife, and could make

out the dim outlines of the hand and arm which held it. Nearer it slowly came, until it was within four inches of his eyes, where it was held still with the point down and the flat of the blade toward him. There was something ghostly about the apparition, something sinister and malign in the pale gleaming of the white steel in the darkness, and for an instant Hartley felt a genuine terror that prompted him to overturn himself in the chair and call for help. But half spell-bound, half using his will, he refrained. He twisted still further around toward the window and saw a dark head outside. At once he knew it to be Cato, and his blood flowed again. He comprehended that the knife was proffered to cut his bonds, and as well as he could in that constrained position, made a gesture of dissent. Resuming his sitting posture, he looked with the eagerness of fresh hope out of the door. The sentry was not to be seen.

Cato held the knife still for a few seconds longer, then seeming to understand why it was not taken, rose up, leaned softly in the window, and felt for Hartley's hands. When assured of their position, he slipped the blade between the leather and the skin, and with a slow withdrawing motion cut the left wristlet in two. Hartley remained motionless until the right hand also was freed; then, taking the knife with the greatest care, he cut through the anklets as more expeditious than unbuckling them, and returned the knife to Cato. Stooping softly, he took off his shoes, handing each out of the window; and then he stood erect.

He went to the window with two cat-like steps, fearing every second to hear a board creak betrayingly in the floor. He put out one leg, and, bending beneath the sash, advanced his head and body. Cato took him in his arms, lifted him slowly out, and set him on his feet. Then, taking his hand, Cato immediately led the way along the back of the houses.

When they came to the interval between the house in which Hartley had been confined, and the one in which the Dewhursts were sleeping, Cato pressed Hartley's arm as a

sign to follow his motions, and lying down flat on the ground, proceeded to work his way over snake-wise. Hartley followed, the two rising again when they got behind the house.

Hartley did not stop to indulge romantic feelings, or even to think of trying to rescue his friends. His strength was so much exhausted that he knew he would be useless to anybody else, and doubted whether he would be able to get himself away. He followed his guide with the same precaution as before, but without pausing.

At the further corner Cato stopped, and speaking for the first time, whispered, "De cap'n sleep pow'ful light." For a moment he seemed irresolute, but then he lay down and bravely advanced again, Hartley following. He remarked as they neared the house that all the windows were open. They reached the corner, and Cato, instead of rising, went along in the narrow path behind the rear wall on his hands and knees. They moved almost inch by inch, putting down their hands with a velvety care, and drinking in the faintest sounds. Under the window of Hackett's room they could hear the deep breathing of his sleep, but they relaxed no precaution.

The danger and anxiety and hope that Hartley felt had again strung up his wearied muscles, and made tense his nerves. The captain's house passed, Cato turned to the left, and still creeping along, skirted the curve of the undergrowth toward the stairs. At each foot of progress he advanced more rapidly and with greater assurance. It took but a little time for them to pass over the intervening ground, to clamber up the slope, and to slip into the perfect obscurity of the cleft. Cato took Hartley's hand and led him up the rough ascent. He stopped at the top to rest, out of breath with the long steep climb, and his feet bruised through his socks by the sharp rocks. He asked Cato for his shoes. "Not yet, sah," was the whisper back. "Dey might hee-eh you walkin', wid 'em on. Come on, sah."

They walked toward the left, in what could be dimly discerned in the fuller light of that higher ground as a path among the trees. It lay parallel with the edge of the bluff, and about twenty yards from it. Over the brink, Hartley looked into the blackness of the pit below as into a yawning crater. From the camp-fire one last ember shot a red gleam, and he thought of it as the solitary spark betraying a silent volcano, still and dark, but holding in its bosom the lurid fires of all hell's passions. As he walked softly and rapidly by, he saw dimly the roof that covered Mary, and he felt for an instant exquisite longing and pain at forsaking her. But then he remembered how great would be her joy in the morning when she learned that he was gone, and what she had told him of ransom, and that he could not help her better than by getting to the ship and leading back a party of rescue. His heart was light again.

Soon they had passed the glen, and following the path, entered a scattering wood on high level land. "Set down and lemme put you' shoes on, Mass' Henry," said Cato. He performed that office for Hartley, carefully brushing off the sticks, sand, and little pebbles that adhered to his stockings. "Now, sah, we got to scratch grabbel," remarked Cato briefly, assisting the lieutenant to rise. He took his hand again and set off at a swift walk. The walk became faster and faster until they were running. Cato's hand was a great help to Hartley.

In five minutes or so the path forked, the plain branch lead off to the right. In the fainter track to the left Cato turned, reducing their gait to a walk. "I spec' we's all right now, Mass Henry," he said. "I was in a hurry cause de relief goes on direckly, an' dey'll miss you then. I wants to git in dat canoe and den dey can't ketch us. Dere ain't no odder boat fo' two, free mile up on dis side."

"Are you sure the canoe's there?" asked Hartley.

"I know whar she was yes'day, sah."

"Suppose she is gone."

"Swim de ribbah, sah. Boat on de odder side."

"I'm afraid I'm too tired to do any more swimming," said Hartley.

"It's narrer at de p'int, an' I'll help you obah. I'se a good swimmer, Mass' Henry."

Hartley remembered Cato's feat in escaping to the shore with irons on, and thought this boast was not a vain one.

"But please de Lor', de canoe'll be dere," went on Cato. "Dere ain't been no 'casion fo' nobody to tech her."

They were now on sloping ground, descending gradually. Hartley had got his breath, and told Cato to go ahead as fast as he pleased, whereupon the darkey set off running again, assisting his companion as before. Directly Hartley caught sight of water through the trees. Cato left the path, turning to right. A few steps took them to the edge of a steep slope of earth bordering a narrow stream. Letting go Hartley's hand, and admonishing him to care, Cato slid down boldly. The officer followed, and found himself, after a rapid descent, on the shore of the creek.

They walked down to where a large tree grew out of the foot of the slope, inclining over the water. By it lay a long dark object on the sand. "De canoe," said Cato, proceeding to cast of the painter by which she was secured to the tree. He felt in the bottom of the canoe. "Here's de paddles—all right," he said. Then he listened intently for a moment. "Dey has missed you, sah; we better go," said he. Stooping down he sent the light craft into the water with one vigorous shove. "Git in, Mass' Henry. Set still in de bottom." Hartley stepped into the crank boat with care; Cato followed him, and taking a paddle, propelled her down the creek and into the adjacent river with vigorous strokes. Hartley tried to assist in paddling, but as Cato told him he would only skin his fingers, without doing any good if he was not accustomed to the exercise, he desisted, and indulged the delicious feeling that came over him at finding himself once more afloat.

Cato directed the canoe straight across the stream into the gloom of the high trees growing upon the opposite lower shore. Once there, he relaxed his efforts somewhat, and began to talk. "See dat p'int up yondah?" he asked, "behind you, sah. Plenty o' water for a big ship round dere. Dey calls it de pond. Golly! sah. You mighty hard to wake. I t'ought I hab to gib it up. You nebber stir when Antone come in to see you."

"I must have been asleep a long time," said Hartley.

"Ony 'bout half-an hour. I seed Miss Ma-ay and Mass' Dewhuss, and make all de 'rangements fo' dem to go—mighty foolish ting, too, sah—dis ole canoe wouldn't hardly hole so many—and Miss Mary and Miss Bell done went out to tell you. When I seed Antone slippin' after 'em, I know'd dere was mischief a-comin'—dat Antone's pow'ful sly—an' I jess watch sharp. Den I see de cap'n go out, and hee-eh de scuffle, an' I hid in de brush behin' de house whar you was, an' I laid pow'ful low. I seed de cap'n talkin' to you, an' I hee-ed all what he said. I wouldn't try to do nuffin' till Antone come in—I know'd den he wouldn't bodder any mo', for his time was nigh out; so I wokened you up. You was pow'ful sleepy, too."

The negro paused awhile, and rested himself by paddling faster. By and by his exertions diminished, the canoe moved more slowly through the water, and he went on. "Deep watah on dis side. De ship could come in here easy on de range."

"What is the range?"

"Tree on de p'int up yondah, an' umberell tree on de sho'. You know de range into de Hole, sah?"

"No."

"Ebbah notice de big white-wash rock on de hill?"

"Yes, often."

"Dere's a tree 'bout half-way down to de watah. Dat's it. Use lanterns at night."

"How do they know on shore when to put the lights on the range?" asked Hartley.

"Lambrilyer alluz burn a green light. De lookout he see it, an' he takes de lanterns out o' de box, an' sets one of 'em on de rock, an' de odder on de groun' by de tree. Den when de schoóner see 'em she burn a red light, and stan' in."

All the while they had been descending the stream rapidly, under the combined influence of its swift current, and the negro's skilful use of the paddles. Not a sound of pursuit had been heard since they left the creek. Hartley, who had been looking ahead with a straining gaze for the sea, now observed that the river broadened to its *débouchure*. So entirely was his confidence reëstablished in his sable savior, that he had not yet thought to ask where he was going, and the question now suddenly occurred to his mind.

"Well, sah," was the answer, "it's so dark, dere's no use tryin' to get to de ship to-night. De watah's smooove now, but s'pose we go out, an' it come on to blow a little—we be in a bad fix in dis canoe. We don' know wedder de ship hee-eh or no—ef she is, it's too dark to fin' her. S'pose we' go two, free mile off sho' at day, and no ship? Cap'n Hackett sen' a boat and fotch us back agin."

Hartley assented to the correctness of this reasoning. "I suppose we had better lay up along shore somewhere, and see what we can do in the morning," said he.

"Yes, sah."

"You'll know best where to go, Cato. What is your notion?"

"My notion, sah, to keep to dis sho' right on down. 'Bout a quarter dis side of de wes' p'int, dere's a neck wid brush on it. 'Tain't mo'n forty steps acrost it, an' we can take de canoe in de brush on top, an' hide dere. Den if dey come arter us, we can put de canoe in de watah on de odder side, an' git a long start—dey'll have to go 'roun' de p'int wid de boat. Dat'll gib us time to git to de lagoon, sah, and de debbil hissef couldn't fin' dis chile in dere."

"Then it would be a good place for you to go to die, Cato," said Hartley.

"He-yaw-w-w ! yaw ! yaw ! Spec' I done laugh too loud. Yaw ! yaw ! If de cruiser's anywheres about in de mornin', sah, we kin jess go off to her. Dey won't want to foller us den, I spec'."

Hartley liked the plan.

Five minutes more of paddling brought them to a place where the shore was a steep slope without trees. Cato turned the bow of the canoe to land, and put her ashore with a few strong strokes of his paddle. They stepped out, pulled her upon the beach, and taking her on their shoulders, staggered up the grade. The slope was covered with bushes three or four feet high, among which they directed their way. Three times Hartley was obliged by his weariness and weakness to stop and lay down his burden, but at last they reached the top. He found himself on a ridge, perhaps thirty feet in height, with the water close at hand on either side. Cato went back for the paddles, returning to find Hartley lying exhausted on the ground.

"Dat's right, Mass' Henry, I spec's you is mos' tired to def. Hee-eh's sumpen 'll do you good—I jess borried it from Mass' Dewhuss—I t'ought maybe it would be handy." "Sumpen" was a flask. Hartley was faintly surprised to find that it contained as good French brandy as he had ever drunk in his life, and he took a deep pull.

"Thank you, Cato. That's the very water of life," said he, handing back the flask.

"Oh, no, sah, that's brandy. Ody-vee, some calls it—jess like ile." Cato tried the liquor himself. "Now you jess go to sleep, Mass' Henry, and I'll keep awake and watch. You ain't got no chawin' terbacker, has you, sah?"

Hartley fumbled in his breast pocket and found some cigars badly damaged by salt water. "That's all I have, Cato," said he, lying back again. "Call me in an hour." The words were hardly spoken before he was asleep.

The next thing he knew, he awoke with a start and bumped his head. Cato had dragged the canoe to his side, and turned it over so as to shield him from the dew; and it was on the gunwale that he struck his head. "Eh!" he exclaimed. "Eight bells already? Light my candle, quartermaster. Where am I?" Then realizing that he was not on shipboard in his state-room, he crawled out from under the canoe and sat up.

The light of the morning covered everything about with an air of cheerfulness. The trees across the river were very fresh and green, and the stream itself ran smoothly by, with something suggestive of joyfulness in its fluent motion. Outside there was in view a part of the familiar ocean horizon. Cato knelt by him, peering through the bushes, his broad black face full of good humor, and looking not a whit the worse for his night's unselfish vigil. "Time to git up, Mass' Henry; sun's mose up, an' I believe I see de cruiser frough the trees ober yondah."

"Where?" asked Hartley, very wide awake all at once.

"Keep down, sah, keep down, dey might see you yit. Right in dere—dere's sumpen white." Hartley's quick nautical glance fell on the sails of a square-rigged vessel in the direction indicated. He could catch but glimpses, so it was impossible to tell whether it was the Flying Fish or not. He watched her slow progress to the westward, shown by the white gliding behind the trees, visible through the small opening of their foliage, with a keen anxiety. The breeze was so light that the craft, whatever she was, made but little headway. His impatience to see her clear the eastern point was, or seemed to be, almost unbearable.

The sails passed on and on, behind tree after tree, their motion seeming to grow slower and slower to the eyes that watched it: but at last the vessel stuck her head-booms out beyond the extreme end of the point against the clear horizon. Hardly was her flying-jib in sight before the lieutenant sung out joyously, "The Fish!"

"De cruiser, sah?" asked Cato.

"Yes, that's she."

"How do you know it am she?" asked Cato.

"By the cut of her jib, of course," answered Hartley gayly.

He watched until he saw her graceful stem appear, then her forward guns, then her foremast. She was about two miles away. "Come, Cato, let's go off," he said gladly.

The canoe seemed very light to Hartley, refreshed by sleep, and with his escape assured. They carried her quickly down the opposite slope, launched her, got in and paddled away, Hartley insisting on lending a hand. Coasting along the western shore, they soon passed the point and headed out so as to intercept the ship.

The canoe spun along famously for about four hundred yards further, when Cato who had been casting anxious glances back, cried, "Look! look dere, Mass' Henry!" in a terrified voice. Hartley looked and saw down the beach about a mile to the east, a boat with four oarsmen pulling to head them off. "Oh, dey'll ketch us! dey'll kill us, Mass' Henry!" said Cato, in a terrible fright. Hartley's only answer was to direct him to keep the boat's head more to the south and to paddle his best. By this plan, though he went in a course which would take him away from the ship, he brought the pirates more astern, and led them directly away from the land. His rapid thought had been to make the chase as long as possible, so as to give the boat that would be sent to his rescue from the sloop every chance to overhaul the pirates on their return, in case they succeeded in overtaking him. He had perfect confidence in the goodness of the lookout kept by the Flying Fish, and was sure that he had been seen already. Nor was he mistaken, for in less than five minutes the sloop's head came to the wind, and her main yard swung back. With delight he saw the weather boat lowered. "They send us the fastest boat in the ship, Cato; we're all right," said he, by way of encouragement. "Mighty glad to hee-eh it, Mass' Henry."

replied Cato, who was panting aloud, and perspiring grossly with his more than willing efforts.

A short time showed the correctness of Hartley's calculation. The pirates in the pursuing boat saw that he was decoying them, and though they were gaining rapidly, and could easily have caught him, they did not like to risk being caught in turn. They turned their boat and pulled leisurely back toward shore.

The officer and the negro, as soon as the pursuit was abandoned, altered their course to meet the coming cutter.

In ten minutes more she ranged alongside the canoe, with her oars apeak. The crew seized the light boat by its gunwale and held it fast, while the two stepped into the cutter. Larkin, who was in charge, and the coxswain, and the men, all were delighted to see Hartley. He shook hands with Larkin, who stammered his pleasure that he had returned. "Glad you're back safe, Mr. Hartley," said the coxswain, rising in his box ; and he suddenly astonished Hartley by shouting, "Three cheers, boys ! An' a hip, hip, hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !" The hearty ringing cheers were evidently heard in the ship, for the rigging was seen at once to fill with a swarm of blue-jackets.

"Thank you kindly, my lads," said Hartley mightily touched, and pleased by this spontaneous token. "If you want to do anything for me, treat Cato Johnson well. He got me out of that hurrah's nest ashore."

"So we will, sir," said the stroke-oarsman; and "So we will," "Good for you, Cato," and such other expressions, came from the rest of the crew. By this time the canoe's painter was secured, and she had been shoved astern. "Go back, coxs'n," commanded Larkin. "Let fall ! Give way together !" ordered the coxswain. The oars splashed in the water with one sound, and the men bent their broad backs to them together, pulling a magnificent stroke that took the boat quickly alongside.

The weather rail was lined fore and aft with eager-faces, everyone looking happy to see Hartley back. He went up

the side, and found himself received with more than royal honors. Every officer and man that could get on deck was there, the officers crowding up to meet him, the men in a dense mass on the booms and the rail and in the gangway. Saluting as common, he tried to make the usual brief report of return to the first lieutenant ; but he found it impossible. They all would shake hands again and again, some of them vociferous, some with tears in their eyes to welcome him back. He could not comprehend how completely they looked on him as one arisen from the dead. He did not know how he had already been mourned among the lowly seamen, whose hearts his skill and courtesy had won ; by the captain, who had admired his abilities and his faithfulness to duty ; among his messmates who had felt the loss of his genial kindness and friendship, and had looked sorrowing last night at his vacant chair at the table. And least of all could he see into the heart of Will Garnet, rejoicing to meet him as a beloved brother returning from the grave. He did not know till afterward that Garnet had spent the whole night on deck, glass in hand, watching with despairing hope for some sign of his old friend. Certainly there was nothing in Garnet's dryly gay words to show how much he had suffered. "Well, old fellow, back again like a bad sixpence, eh?" he said, as he gripped his hand.

Cato meanwhile stood in the gangway, alternately showing his ivory in a broad grin, and looking scared. He could not help remembering his former visit to the ship, and feeling, at intervals, rather dubious about his present reception. Hartley did not forget his faithful ally and rescuer.

"Captain Merritt," said he, "this man, Cato Johnson, has probably saved my life. I couldn't have got away without his help. He was in a manner pressed by the pirates in the first place, and has been trying to escape from them for a long time."

"I am allowed another servant, Mr. Hartley," responded

the captain, "and I think we can utilize Cato. Cato, how are you?" said he, addressing the boy.

"Po'ly, bress de Lor', Mass' Cap'n."

"How would you like to come in the cabin, and wait on me?"

"Kin I git back to Mass' Robert Johnson's, on de Eas'n Sho', Marylan', sah," asked Cato.

"As soon as there's a chance you shall go," promised the captain.

"Den de 'rangement would be extrawdery suitable, to de bess o' my judgment, sah."

"Very well. Mr. McKizick, see that he is shipped, and let the paymaster issue him some clothing, and send him in to me."

"Very good, sir."

"Hoist the boat, and get the canoe on deck, and fill away, sir."

"Aye, aye, sir. Mr. Briggs, run up the cutter, and get in the canoe, and fill away, sir."

"Aye, aye, sir. Hook on third cutter! Lay aft to the boat falls! Main-topmen, get a whip on the main yard!"

"Mr. Hartley," said the captain, "come in and breakfast with me at eight o'clock. Mr. McKizick and Mr. Garnet, may I have the pleasure of your company, also?"

"With pleasure, sir."

The captain went into his cabin, and Hartley followed Garnet down into the ward-room, himself followed by his impressed messmates. He was the hero of the hour, and his adventures were an object of great curiosity; but there were certain parts of them which he could not divulge to a mess of irreverent and scoffing bachelors. He knew he could not tell a straightforward story without preparing it; and, as he was determined not to bungle, he put off the assaults at once made upon his reticence, by declaring it was "no great shakes ashore—he was too tired to talk—he was in a hurry—he had to bathe and shift, to go into

the cabin for breakfast." So saying, he ran away laughing into his state-room and closed the door.

A bath was a great refreshment. He protracted his toilet until he heard the bell strike eight, when he emerged, a very different looking man from the shrunken and sandy person who had come on board three-quarters of an hour before.

Garnet and McKizick were waiting for him on the gun-deck, and they went into the cabin together. They sat down at once to the table, where Hartley distinguished himself again. Cato, attired in navy blue, made an efficient servant. He had insisted on beginning his new duties immediately.

When the meal was over (which was not very soon, as three of them protracted their breakfast, to give Hartley's unappeasable appetite a fair chance), the captain brought out a box of cigars, and they lighted up. "Now, Mr. Hartley, let's know what you've seen, and where you've been," said the captain.

Hartley went over the events of the night as briefly as possible, laying special stress upon the things which were of military importance. When he came to give the reason for going up among the pirates, he hesitated, blushed, and stopped. "Well," said he, stammering in a very embarrassed fashion, "the truth is, that the young lady I'm engaged to marry was up there, and I knew it, and I have been very anxious about her ever since I found out she was in their hands. I thought maybe I could get her and her family away."

"Most excellent reason, Mr. Hartley," said the captain, with a twinkle; "I suspected as much. Mr. McKizick, rescuing female American citizens from the hands of bloody pirates comes under the head of public service, doesn't it?"

"Of course, sir," replied the first lieutenant, with a grin.

"But I don't believe your messmates would take that view only, if you should tell them," continued the captain, twinkling broadly with fun.

"Trust me for that, sir," said Hartley rapidly, in great confusion.

"Well, go on, sir."

He went on with his recital, told of the disaffection that existed in the gang, mentioned its force as nearly as he could, described the topography of the country, pointed out the ranges on the chart, and in short told nearly everything but what had passed between Mary and himself. He dwelt very lightly on his hidings and creepings—they hurt his pride yet. "I then took up a position in the rear of Hackett's house," was his manner of phrasing it—and he forgot to mention what he had heard about the buried money. Before he left the cabin, he remembered it, but the almost irresistible repugnance which lies in every man's breast, to sharing such knowledge, sealed his mouth. He felt that the treasure was his by the right of discovery, that no one else could have any claim to know or divide. How strange is the power which "hid treasure" of all kinds has always had over man's mind! It is more than, and different from, the common vulgar power of lucre. Perhaps its part of secrecy and mystery is what enslaves us.

When Hartley had finished, there was silence for awhile. He had so completely given his knowledge that no one had any questions to ask. Presently the captain requested McKizick's opinion as to the best course of action to follow. He was strong for sending in a boat party immediately by way of the Cobre. Hartley agreed with him cordially. Garnet, on being asked, agreed, except as to time: he thought it would be better to wait till night. "Well, gentlemen," said the captain, rising to break up the sitting, "I think much as you do. We had better wait till night, however. Mr. McKizick, let it be known in the ship, if you please. You and Mr. Hartley and Mr. Briggs are to go again, and let Mr. Larkin take the doctor, with an armed party in the gig, in addition. Mr. Hartley, get the doctor to excuse you from duty; you must have some sleep and rest." They left the cabin and went below.

Hartley turned into his bunk, and Garnet came in and sat with him, to hear the parts of the story his friend had thought best to omit in the cabin. Garnet was greatly interested, almost nervous, in listening to the story of the attack of the mates on Mary and Isabel; though Hartley remembered his promise, and said nothing about the actual personal contact with Markley, which had so terribly cut Isabel's pride. The anxiety passed into thoughtfulness, when Garnet heard of Hartley's intervention, and Isabel's escape.

One thing was not mentioned between the friends—the treasure. It would have been a pleasure to Hartley to share the secret with his friend; but a thought had occurred that kept him silent for his friend's sake.

As Hartley's speech became rather languid after awhile, the careful listener told him to stop talking and go to sleep. The command was soon obeyed. After his deep regular breathing showed him to be in the land of Morpheus, Garnet sat long, watching him with something like a maternal satisfaction. The joy he felt was none the less deep because his quiet nature allowed him no expression. It was strange that his mind should then find another subject still more fascinating.

Hartley awoke at four in the afternoon, and found the ship still standing off and on. Preparations were making among the boats' crews for the expected expedition. Men were getting the yard and stay tackles ready, grinding cutlasses, getting up whips, bringing up weapons and boat anchors, examining oars and tackles, and doing all they could at the moment to be in readiness. He noticed an unusual and severe quietness in all their looks and actions, an absence of the jovial hilarity usually prevailing on such occasions. He could not understand it, until he learned that while he slept, the burial service for the dead at sea had been performed, and the bodies of seven brave men, victims in the unfortunate attack of the preceding day, had been committed to the deep. This explained the stern

silence, and the resolution apparent in the faces of their surviving shipmates.

The captain waited until the hour between daylight and full moonlight, the time of dusk and the greatest obscurity; and then, the ship being off the river, ran up far enough to be screened between the points, and there cast anchor.

The preparations for the expedition to leave the ship began at once, and went on in a marvellous silence. The heavy yard purchases, and the stays, hooked to the triatic, were swayed quietly aloft into place, the yards were braced and secured, and soon the boom boats were out of the chocks and lying in the water alongside the ship. Without delay, they were armed, equipped, and manned; and they left the ship in line, with Hartley leading as before. The fresh and willing men propelled them against the current at a good speed. Keeping in the shadow of the tree-lined western shore, and pulling muffled oars, they ascended the stream almost noiselessly. When opposite the little creek down which he had escaped, and which he recognized without difficulty, Hartley diverged from the previous course, and pulled straight across the stream, followed by the other boats. They entered the creek one after another, and ascended it a little way without incident or stoppage, though it was so narrow that the oars nearly touched the shore on either hand. Just above the leaning tree Hartley beached his boat, the others following, and doing the same.

The crews landed, boat-keepers received their instructions, and word was quietly passed by the officers among the men to preserve perfect silence, follow their leader, and keep their arms sheathed. Hartley showed the way up the steep bank, the men scrambled up nimbly, and in a minute more the whole force was moving in a long serpentine single file along the path toward the glen.

Hartley was at the head of the column, with McKizick just behind him, Larkin in the middle, Briggs and the doctor bringing up the rear.

The line undulated along in the winding pathway, pass-

ing through the shadows and across the patches of moonlight with a gentle brushing sound of footsteps, and without a word spoken. When they reached the point at which the path forked, Hartley whispered to McKizick that it would be well to leave men there to watch. McKizick stopped, the man next behind closed up until he could go no further, and so it went along the column till all had halted without a word of command being given, and the line had contracted to one-third of its former length. Then Larkin was detailed, with three men, and instructions to hide just in front of the forks on both sides of the path, and to be prepared to stop any runaway pirates who might try to pass that way in escaping. This done, McKizick whispered, "Go ahead!" to Hartley, and the column again lengthened as the men one by one resumed the march.

No further incident occurred until they were close upon the glen. The men were again halted; the three officers consulted together, and word was passed along how to act. The four men in the rear were to stop with the doctor and guard the head of the stairs. The others were to go quietly and rapidly down, those first reaching the bottom to wait for the rest, and for further orders.

As it was planned, so it was executed. The men advancing again, very hurriedly now, soon choked up the stairs in their efforts to get down first; and, as each one emerged from the lower opening, he was quickly put into a group forming by Hartley and McKizick.

But, while they had been moving along the edge of the bluff toward the stairway, Hartley had been struck by the stillness of the amphitheatre below. No sound of voices reached him, and there was no fire to be seen in the usual place. Mistrusting this quietude, and fearing that the pirates had seen the movements of the ship, and were lying in ambush prepared to give them a hot reception, he said nothing but watched all the more closely.

When half the men were down, McKizick, impatient of delay, spoke aloud, "Show the way, Hartley!" Then,

drawing his sword he waved it in the moonlight, crying, "Come on, my lads! Revenge your messmates!" and sprang after Hartley, who was already running toward Hackett's house. The men followed close after, shouting.

Hartley fully expected to be greeted by a volley as he turned the corner. At the cool repellent quiet he met, he paused, more checked than he would have been by an enemy. The men following stopped also in astonishment, and the shouts died on their lips. For a moment there was a silence, broken only by the panting of those who had been last to get down the stairs, and who joined the party singly and breathless.

"What does this mean, Hartley?" asked McKizick, in a bewildered, helpless voice, at length.

"I don't know, unless there's some devilish trap about it, sir," replied he. "Let's look around the houses."

"Lead on."

Hartley went first instinctively to the door of the building in which he knew the Dewhursts had been lodged. It stood open, and he entered it with McKizick, the men waiting outside, and beginning to talk wonderingly. The light entered the windows enough to show them that the house still contained its furniture, and seemed to have been lately occupied. The beds were made up, the chairs stood about, and the three trunks sat against the wall. Hartley stood confounded, staring about him with perplexity, and feeling as if he had lost something valuable. He was thinking of Mary.

"Come, let's look on farther," said McKizick, going out. "Keep together, men!" he ordered.

They walked along the semicircle and looked into several of the houses, but nothing rewarded the search except the discovery that all the buildings seemed to have been lately occupied. The wind sighed softly among the branches of their leafy roofs, the limbs swayed gently, the little stream gurgled and flashed in the moon, which looked

down with steady goldenness. But no sight or sound of man's making met their eyes or ears.

Suddenly an idea struck Hartley. "McKizick," said he excitedly, "keep the men in the middle—don't let them touch a thing—I'll be back presently. This way, third cutter's!" His boat's crew leaped forward to obey him, and followed him in single file as he ran toward the undergrowth at the point where the stream left the glen. Unquestioningly they dashed into its shallow waters, and before McKizick could recover himself enough to ask a question, they were all out of sight among the bushes that lined its winding bed. Hartley was down the stream in two minutes. Dashing through the shallow waters over the hard sand bottom at its mouth, he stopped and threw a hasty glance around the Haven. It was empty—La Hembrilla was gone!

The men were coming up rapidly; but without waiting for them to arrive, Hartley darted off afresh along the firm southern beach, shouting, "This way, lads!" Two or three of the foremost caught up with him, and together they dashed over the sandy curve, followed closely by the rest. They reached the promontory, turned it, and ran along the western shore of the entrance, with which some of them were sadly familiar. Under the bending branches, under swaying palm tops, in the shade of the cliff they raced along. They reached the edge of the low surf, which rolled gently in, with a lazy want of sympathy with their haste. They paused and gazed. There to seaward—not a mile away—with every sail set in the light breeze, standing to the southeast—there was the vessel they had so long and vainly sought. The schooner had again eluded them.

Hartley did not need any time to consider, but turning instantly, he called, "Come back!" and started away as fast as he had come. In ten minutes from the time he so unceremoniously left, he rejoined the first lieutenant; and his men had all returned before he had told the news.

"The d—d scoundrels!" growled McKizick, in a voice that showed how much he thought himself injured. "What a trick! There's only one thing to be done, Hartley, and that's to get back the way we come, and quick, too. Come along, men!" he shouted.

The seamen obeyed, sheathing their drawn weapons; and soon all were up the cleft, in column on the high land above. "Now run!" shouted McKizick. Off they started, pell-mell.

By the time they reached the forks, the whole party was out of breath, and going along panting at a rapid walk. The apparition of the party left behind at that place, rising and coming forward from their hiding-places, gave McKizick, who was in the lead, a violent start. He had forgotten them. Larkin reported, "Got a prisoner, sir."

"Prisoner, eh? Take care the d—d scoundrel doesn't get away, and fetch him along as fast as you can. Put him between two and trot him, d—n him!" growled the irritated officer.

They reached the boats, shoved them off, and tumbled in promiscuously. "A race for the ship!" shouted McKizick. After some confusion and collisions caused by haste in the narrow creek, the boats gained the clear water of the river, and a race it was. The strong rowers soon took them down the swift current to the ship.

McKizick gained the deck, and found the captain waiting for the news. Briefly he reported their ill-luck and Hartley's discovery; and instantly he received the order to get in the boats and get the anchor.

In a short time, and with the precision that obtains only in a well-drilled man-of-war, the boats were stowed, the anchor was up, sail was made, and the ship was running down the river. But though the time was relatively short, it was all too long. When the Fish cleared the point, the closest scanning of the horizon by the best eye revealed no trace of a sail.

CHAPTER XXVII.

AT one o'clock, when the man Antonio was relieved, Hartley's absence was discovered, and reported to Hackett without delay.

The captain hastened to the room in which the prisoner had been confined ; and the first thing he did was to feel with his hand if the chair yet retained any warmth from Hartley's body. It was quite cold, an assurance that his flight had not been very recent. Questioning Antonio, in whom he had perfect confidence, he found that Hartley had certainly been there half an hour before. He stopped the relief guard, just on the point of setting out for the bluffs by the Haven, and detailed them in squads to search in different directions. He did not despair of catching Hartley, and would not omit any means of doing so, so great an importance did the ex-prisoner suddenly assume in his eyes by decamping with exact knowledge of the quarters and the band.

One small party he sent to seize the canoe, and watch the point near by ; another was to patrol the shore of the river ; another was sent to follow the north shore of the Haven around to the sea, and push the search in that direction ; another was detailed to follow up the right-hand fork of the wood path ; and several messengers were despatched to carry the news to piratical haunts, and to villages near by.

Orders were sent to Big Ben to man the boats of La Hembrilla, and go outside and watch the beach ; while the remainder of his party, except a bare lookout, were to return to the quarters. As each party set off, it was cautioned to spread its force and to hunt silently, so as not to alarm the refugee ; and when the rest of Markley's watch came back to the quarters, they were set to hunting over the

glen itself with torches, so that if Hartley were hiding there he might not be overlooked.

All this while, Hackett had not missed Cato. He knew that the prisoner's fastenings had been cut, and supposed that some one in the gang had been bribed to do it ; but his suspicions had not rested on any one man. Cato had been so submissive and useful since his return from his escapade down the coast that no thought of him at first presented itself. But when the party who went to seize the canoe sent back word that it was gone, Hackett at once recalled Cato's former dissatisfaction. Inquiry failed to produce him ; no one had seen him for some time, and he was not in the hut. Hackett, like a sensible man, called in his beaters, which was easily done by signals in common use among the men, and gave up the attempt for the night. But he had two boats remain outside, with orders to keep a very bright lookout about dawn. We have seen how Hartley escaped, in spite of this last precaution.

The pirate leader felt very uneasy. Just as he thought himself secure from the outside enemy, and safe in his secret plan of forestalling the bloodthirsty and disaffected band by flight, a single false move had altered the appearance of the game much for the worse. To his reflecting mind that move had been to blow out the candle in Hartley's room, and perhaps he was right. Now the outlook was bad. One of the enemy's officers had been in the glen and had seen—he was disposed to think—everything. That officer had communicated with prisoners, and then, guided by a keen negro who was perfectly familiar with the details of the place, had made his escape by a route that laid open its weakest point. Hackett felt that his security on shore was immensely lessened, and his retreat by water indefinitely postponed. He lay awake all the rest of the night pondering.

By morning he had decided. On the certainty in his mind that the cruiser would soon send a party up the river, he based his plans and proceeded to give his orders.

The right-hand fork of the wood-path led up in the country to the roads, and was the usual means of communicating with the towns. About a mile beyond the fork was a rude bridge across the creek in which Hartley had found the canoe, the stream up there being reduced to a mere brook; and near the bridge was a spring of fresh water and an ancient uninhabited building.

Hackett, keeping a sharp lookout on the Flying Fish, had the women leave the quarters immediately after an early breakfast, and take up their line of march for the bridge, bearing with them as many cooking utensils as they could carry, and taking their children. Having disposed of these impediments, he divided the men into two parties. One, composed of ten men whom he knew to be faithful to himself, he sent to the schooner, with orders to get her ready to go to sea at any minute; the other contained all the rest of the gang, which he put under Arrowson's command.

The orders the mate received, were to move enough provisions to the bridge to last for several days, together with bedding and other necessaries; to make a camp by the spring; to be very vigilant in guarding the prisoners; and to remain in the new locality until further instructions. Hackett explained to Arrowson whence he expected the attack, and that he did not think the band strong enough to resist it successfully. Besides, though he did not say so, it was a kind of fighting in which there was no profit, and to which he did not believe his men adapted. No one knew better than he that they were cowardly as well as ferocious, and that they would not sustain a fair open combat against equal numbers.

He explained that he was getting *La Hembrilla* ready to take her to sea, and save her from the certain destruction that would follow if the United States forces found her moored in the Hole.

He urged strongly upon Arrowson to keep a lookout posted in the high trees over the glen, beside a sentry at

the fork of the roads, one on the cliffs, and one at the mouth of the creek. This would insure his keeping properly informed of the movements of the enemy.

Finally he adjured the mate to care for the comfort of the Dewhurst family, and of Catarina, whom he left as an especial trust. Arrowson listened and assented to all.

Not without many misgivings had Hackett resolved to pursue this course. Utterly suspicious and mistrustful of Arrowson, and believing that he had tampered with the fidelity of many of the gang, he dreaded putting Catarina in his power, and was loath to leave Mary and Isabel, in whom he had taken a curious interest, to his tender mercies. So strong was his dislike, that he took the first occasion to speak privately to Mr. Dewhurst, warning him to take care of the girls ; and he fully explained the gravity of their situation to Catarina, that she might enlist in their favor the moral forces which women everywhere use against men. Catarina spoke to Juliette, Arrowson's *quasi* wife.

Hackett would have been glad to put the prisoners and Catarina on board the schooner and to sail at once from the scenes of brutality and danger of which he was tired ; but the two men whom he had sent to rebury the treasure had not yet returned. He feared to leave them, lest, making an easy excuse of abandonment, they should appropriate the hoard. His cupidity would not permit any step to risk the dear-bought gold.

He hoped that the great confidence he was showing in Arrowson, and the command he was giving him, would put the rascal in a good humor, blind him, and serve to delay an open outbreak. He deceived himself. Arrowson, who had a very correct idea of his chief's character and methods, was not to be so easily hoodwinked ; and the disaffection and treachery in the gang were far greater than Hackett imagined. Already it was an understood thing among many that the captain and his friends were to be slain on the first opportunity. The pirates were weary of his discipline, they longed for greater license, they wished to

divide their gains among fewer, and they were now greedily jealous of the money their leader made by purchasing from them individual shares of spoil.

In the morning the Dewhurst family found out from the attendant who took Cato's place that Hartley had escaped. Their joy was great at this ; and though Mr. Dewhurst was at first inclined to grumble because he had gone without taking them, he soon agreed with the girls that Hartley had done very well ; and he began to look for the blue-jackets with whom he expected the young lieutenant to return immediately.

Poor Mrs. Dewhurst's dismay, wonder, and delight, at learning for the first time that Hartley had been a prisoner, had met and talked with her daughter, and had escaped so easily and mysteriously, was funny to both girls, who felt very light-hearted. Their gayety changed into apprehension when they learned they were to move their quarters, and saw the gravity of Mr. Dewhurst's face.

Hackett watched a chance when the Fish was standing across the easterly stretch of her blockade, and escorted the Dewhurst family and Catarina over to the bridge. He could ill be spared from the glen, and he was anxious at leaving when the sloop might at any moment send in her boats to a fresh attack ; but he was pretty sure she would wait till dark, and he was very anxious to go.

The way was a lovely path, winding over rolling ground, amid a luxuriant tropical vegetation ; but the novelty and richness of the scenes through which they passed were lost upon the strangers. Their minds were too much engrossed with foreboding care to enjoy, or hardly to notice.

As they walked along, Hackett signed to Mr. Dewhurst to let the ladies precede them, and soon after, taking advantage of a curve in the path which hid them from the advance of the party, he stopped suddenly. " See here," he said, with averted eyes and uneasy face, " I can't take you along, and I can't bring myself to like the idear o'

leavin' you. Take these." "These" were a pair of short, double-barrelled pistols. "Hide 'em," said Hackett. "They're loaded. Here's some ammunition. Keep your eyes open—watch Arrowson. If you get a good chance to go the cruiser, *go!* and I wish you'd take my wife with you if you go."

Mr. Dewhurst, surprised as he was at this fresh proof of what seemed goodness in a man so bad, did not ask any questions, but hastily put the weapons out of sight. He was a good enough judge of men to know from what he had seen that queries were useless. Hackett would speak if he had anything more to say. Surprise was followed by increased dread of the future, as the ominous meaning of Hackett's gift and words came into his mind.

Every now and then they met little parties of the pirates going back to the quarters for another load of provisions, after having deposited those which they had brought. Their broad hats, high boots, gaudy shirts, and colored sashes stuck full of knives and pistols, formed dashing gay costumes which made the freebooters seem in unison with the rich careless nature about them. Even their lazy stroll, as they puffed their cigarette smoke in blue wreathings on the warm still air, seemed to accord with the tropical calm of the woods. In one of these parties Hackett saw a Spaniard, whom he summoned by the name of Pedro, and bade to follow them.

They had not been loitering in their walk, and now they were approaching the bridge. It was a charming view that met them there. There was a space clear of undergrowth of perhaps forty yards in diameter, a circle with the bridge for its centre, and divided into irregular halves by the stream. Large trees grew about, affording a perfect shade and a place to swing hammocks. A little spring ran out from under a mass of gray rock on the further side of the brook, with which it speedily mingled its waters. On the side they stood upon, off to the right of the bridge and opposite the spring, was an old house with two rooms, which showed

the marks of age in its decaying and tumble-down condition. Grasses waved from its sagging roof, and plants grew up between the planks of its porch-floor. The bridge itself was rude but picturesque, one of its heavy rustic rails being entirely hidden from sight under a thick cover of flowering vines, whose long arms hung swaying down toward the water. To give life to the scene, the pirates' women were moving about lithely in their brilliant colors, busy at slinging hammocks, spreading cooking utensils out on the ground, gathering sticks for fuel, and other of their new domestic duties. Their children were wading in the brook, splashing the water, and swearing in soft Spanish as each pretty new stone or shell was found.

Hackett led the party to the house. "This is your room—together," said he. "Make yourselves to hum. Mates have the other room. Your things 'll be over. Pedro 'll tend to you if you want anything before your boy comes. Good-by. Take good care of yourself, Miss Mary, and you, too, Miss Bell. Mornin', ma'am. *A Dios, Catarina.*" So saying, he kissed the girl and went away, leaving her in tears.

All that day the men kept coming into the new camp with little loads of provisions. They would drop their burdens with a worn-out air, and then sit down to rest, smoke, gabble, and trifle away the time. The consequence of this indolent manner of working, was that at night the pile of provisions on the porch of the old house was ridiculously small, while as for bedding and other necessities, there was almost none. The Dewhursts and Catarina reposed that night in their clothing, all on one soiled quilt spread out on the floor.

Through the day the girls had a great deal of talk with Catarina, who was at once an object of pity and admiration and a distraction for them. Her timidity was attractive, like that of a gentle fawn one might find alone among wild woods. When her confidence was gained, she talked a great deal to them in her broken English. Mrs. Dewhurst, who saw her

"condition," objected very strongly to the growing intimacy, but the girls took their own way. They seemed to feel that mother and Aunt Susan was so much out of her sphere that her judgment was not very valuable; and this was true. Mrs. Dewhurst's life had been one thing always, and the annoyances, dangers and apprehensions to which to which she had been subjected had almost broken her down. Used to run in the good deep old ruts of convention so long, her stiffened mind was terribly shaken by the great jolt that sent it so far out of its accustomed track. The girls being young, elastic, and full of rebound, were able to bear the changes better. They liked the naive child-woman's ways, and before the day was over they liked her.

Hackett kept a good lookout on the motions of the sloop. By sending a man into the top of a lofty tree, he was constantly informed of her situation. Consequently, he knew as soon as the Fish entered the river, and he lost no time in getting the last party away with a final load of provisions. He sent word to Arrowson to observe the motions of the expedition, which he was confident would soon be on shore; and he ordered the man who stayed behind to light the range to keep an eye on the visitors. Arrowson, in his pride and conscious power, paid no attention to the message he received; and we have seen how the sentry left by Hackett fell into the hands of the seamen as he was hurrying to inform the mate of their presence.

But the chief knew nothing of this, because he had not waited to run any risks, but, while the sloop lay up the river where she could not see outside, had swept the schooner out of the Hole, made sail, and stood out to the light breeze setting from the northwest. He first ran to the southeast, because that course would probably prevent him from being espied by the cruiser, and because he thought that if she should see him she would be deceived as to his intentions. He meant to run out of sight in that direction, and then stand to the southward to Isla Bella, where he

would wait a few days. He expected that the quarters would be burned, and hoped that the sloop, after doing that, would leave him a clear coast, and the chance he longed for of deserting his gang with the schooner.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE Flying Fish was put before the wind, head southeast, and all the studding-sails set. With her long booms projecting far out over the water and holding the great sails by a hardly visible support, she seemed like a splendid aquatic bird with wings, milky-white in the moon, extended to catch the breeze.

But after the first half hour, twenty times as much sail would not have availed to drive her at any great speed. The officers saw to their sorrow that the little wind they had was becoming less; and the men damned it freely. In vain did certain old salts stand with their faces aft, and softly, alluringly, whistle by the half-hour. Boreas was coy. Uselessly did they stick their knives into that side of the mast on which the breeze was desired: it would not come. At midnight Quartermaster William Johnson pulled his sheath-knife out of the spanker mast, where it had been sticking three hours for the good of the service, and sighingly remarked to Bill Burke, who came to relieve him, that "when he sailed with Thomas Ap Catesby R. Jones, sir, he never know'd it to fail." Hartley had turned in at ten, sorrowful, fearful, and reproaching himself for not having made at least an effort to get Mary away when he had the chance.

Afterward, all night long, in the moonshine and in the hazy darkness, the ship continued to move along in the same torpid manner, scarcely holding steerage way, scarcely seeming to move.

Hartley came on deck at four, to keep the morning watch. He found in the order-book instructions to wake the Captain and the first lieutenant at that hour, and to report to the captain the bearings of the land and whether anything was in sight. He noted down the bearings, with surprise to find how close in they were, sent them in to the captain by the midshipman of the quarter-deck, and had McKizick called.

The first lieutenant came on deck himself directly, being one of the old-fashioned kind who liked to oversee the ship's work from daylight till dark. He saluted, glanced around the horizon with the unavoidable habit of an old officer, and, like Hartley, was surprised to find the ship so close in shore. The Fisherman's Key was only about two miles distant, bearing northeast on the port beam.

"Hello!" exclaimed McKizick. "There's more current than I thought."

"We've made so little it has had a fair sweep at us," replied Hartley. "I'm afraid we have a slim chance of seeing the schooner again soon."

"It doesn't look like it, that's a fact," responded McKizick. "I believe the rascals have cut out to take some other place for their headquarters, and we'll have all this work over again, and more, may be."

"It seems very much as you say," remarked Hartley ruefully. "Did you get anything out of that fellow Mr. Larkin caught?"

"Not a word. The captain had him in the cabin last night and tried to pump him, but he wouldn't talk. He didn't understand any English, or French, or Spanish, or he pretended he didn't, any how. He's a d—d Portygee, and we haven't anybody in the ship that knows their lingo. He *no intendency* nothin'. I'll take good care the rascal don't get away like your darkey did."

The two were walking up and down the quarter-deck while they talked. Presently McKizick began again: "There's something more than we know about that key,

Hartley—something queer. You recollect how we found La Hembrilla hove to there the first time, with her boat in?—and the box? and how we saw her stop there again? Then you picked up their muster-roll when you went over. Well, night before last, when you were ashore and we were looking out for you, the captain took a notion you might have got down this way, and he had the ship run down here. We made a long leg to the point there, and hove to and watched, and we saw a light bobbing around in the middle of the key. We couldn't make it out, but thought it might be you; so we burned a port-fire. The light was put out or hid right away, like somebody was scared, and we didn't see it any more. We would have sent in a boat to over-haul it, but concluded you was further west and didn't like to lose any chance of picking you up. There was a big lot of port-fires expended on your account that night, young man."

Hartley's recollections gave him a ready explanation of the light. He had no doubt that it was carried by the men Jackson and Peters, whose instructions to change the place of the treasure he had overheard; but his invincible unwillingness to share the secret still kept him silent. Bread eaten in secret is pleasant.

McKizick was possessed by thoughtfulness for some minutes. "I'll do it," he spoke out decidedly after awhile.

"Do what?"

"Send a boat in. We're almost dead in the water now, and shan't lose any time by waiting, and maybe we can find out something. Maybe there's somebody over there watching us now. I'll see the captain."

So saying he ran below, returning in five minutes. "Man the third cutter, sir," he commanded. The boat was called away and got ready.

"Boat's ready, sir; who shall I send in charge?" asked Hartley.

"Take charge yourself, sir. I'll relieve you. Go in and find out what you can. If there's anybody on the key

bring him off. Be a little careful in landing. Choose a spot where there's no cover near the beach—there might be another ambush, you know. Shove off!"

Hartley left the ship and pulled in shore. Rounding the point, he landed on the southeastern part of the key, at a spot where the sand extended back from the beach in a low flat field for some distance. He took half the boat's crew, and sent each man separately across in a different direction, with orders to come back as soon as he had reached the opposite side. This done, he walked alone along the eastern beach. The two pointed rocks were there, close to the shore, plain and unmistakable, and off to his left, toward the middle of the barren islet, were the three mounds. He went directly to the furthest one, and ascended its yielding slope. On its peaked top were foot tracks, and the surface of the soil showed the marks of recent disturbance. Evidently he had heard correctly—there was no mistake—this was the spot—and beneath him, he thought as he stood on the summit, within three feet of him, lay a rich treasure. He was inclined for an instant to call his men, dig it up, and take it back to the ship; but he remembered his previous silence, and the thought of his embarrassment at having to account therefor deterred him. He did not believe the government would divide it as prize money: if it should, there would be very little for each one; and his own plan for securing and using it promised good results. As before, he held his peace—of course.

Half an hour later he was again on board the ship in charge of the deck, performing his duties mechanically, and forgetting the buried treasure, like all other things, in fears, hopes, and plans for his beloved Mary.

By this time the breeze had failed entirely, and the ship rolled in a glassy calm. So she continued till nine o'clock, when a fresh cool wind came up off the sea and caught her sails aback. Her head was boxed off, the yards trimmed sharp up, and the pleasant sound of parted murmuring

water was again heard, the life-like careen again felt, as she danced away merrily, full and by.

On the very first stretch off shore, a sail was reported in the east. The orders then were to work over in that direction, and many curious, hopeful eyes watched the distant speck with eagerness. It fast grew larger, coming directly toward them, but before they could make out her rig, the advancing vessel took a sudden alarm. Shifting her course to the south, the glass revealed, as she swung around, that she was a schooner. Even the lookout on the topsail-yard could make out no more than that, which left to all hands the hope and supposition that she was *La Hembrilla*.

This put life into the crew. They were all disappointed at the failure of the effort to punish the slayers of their messmates ; and here was a fresh chance. Nevertheless, it was to be another disappointment. The stranger sailed so badly that, in spite of her laying closer, the *Flying Fish* overhauled her fast. By two o'clock it was apparent to everybody that she was nothing but a dull and badly scared merchantman with a deck-load. When there was no longer a shade of doubt, the pursuit was stopped, and the ship put before the wind. This evidently inspired the schooner with fresh confidence, for she resumed her old course again, coming down wing and wing.

Captain Merritt explained to Hartley and Garnet, who, with the first lieutenant, had been watching the schooner, his reasons for running back. "Just as like as not, gentlemen, that Hackett, who is a very sly dog, is playing a fresh trick on us. You saw him standing to the southeast, Mr. Hartley, but none of us know how long he kept that course. Perhaps he has run away in this manner, expecting us to believe that he has abandoned his old quarters. I think it more than likely, and I believe he is not apt to come back at once. He will give us a little while to make sure he is gone. Now I am going to try his own tactics on him. I am going to run the ship up the *Cobre* to-night, if the wind

holds, and *hide* her there; and to-morrow we'll establish a regular look-out station, after we take a look at his village, and make sure he isn't already back. We'll prepare to receive him as he did us; eh, gentlemen?"

They all fell in with Captain Merritt's idea at once, and Hartley was particularly well pleased, as it seemed to him the very best chance he had to get some news of Mary. He did not believe Hackett would abandon all the plunder left in the quarters without once returning to see what could be saved. Beside, nobody knew where else to look after the pirates. It was much the better plan to make sure they were gone before commencing to search for them elsewhere. He thought he would like to be assigned to constant duty as a lookout; it seemed to him that he would be far happier watching, glass in hand, for the coming of the vessel that carried Mary, than in doing any other work.

They set the studding-sails to make the most of the sea-breeze while it lasted, and ran back to the northward and westward, the wind failing by degrees, as it had in the night.

Hartley and Garnet spent the afternoon together on the gun-deck by the bridle-port. Out of its inclining square they watched the play of light upon the waves, the sparkling blue waters, the land they were approaching. They talked of the many and varied incidents their cruise had afforded them, of their future hopes and plans, of their feelings, and by turns they were silent, as the impulse seized them. Never before had Hartley been allowed to look more clearly into his friend's heart of hearts, and recognizing its purity and faithfulness it seemed to him a holy of holies. He revered Garnet for the time, and felt ashamed to think of his own capriciousness in contrast.

Hartley, of course, spoke about his fears for Mary's safety, dwelling painedly on the attack made by Arrowson.

"Harry," said Garnet, "I'm not sure that I'm not as anxious as you."

"Why? What do you mean?"

"On Isabel's account." It was the first time he had ever heard Garnet speak of her by her Christian name.

"No," said Hartley, "you haven't the same reason that I have."

"I believe I have."

"What! you don't love her!" said Hartley bluntly, turning to look at his friend in amazement. Garnet was blushing.

"To the best of my knowledge and belief, I do," was the candid response.

"Well, I declare! How did it happen? I am perfectly astonished!"

"It happened as usual, I suppose. I saw her and liked her, and heard her talked about, and thought of her—and perhaps your example was infectious."

"You have never spoken to her?"

"Not a word. I'm by no means sure she would accept me."

"She would, she would," affirmed Hartley, eagerly. Then he added fervently, "The Lord take care of her and give you a chance to ask her."

"Amen," replied Garnet, half seriously, half in his accustomed dry tone. Presently, as if afraid he had shown himself too openly, he commenced on an entirely different subject. "Did you ever hear Robbins talk about religion," he asked.

"No. Why? What does he believe?"

"He is a fatalist—a perfect Turk."

"How do you know?"

"I overheard him talking to the midshipmen in the steerage one night. He goes in sometimes and drinks with them, but I don't think his influence will do them any good. His reputation for bravery makes them look up to him, but he hasn't anything to teach them they ought to learn. One night, as I was getting ready to go on deck for the first watch, I heard voices in the steerage raised pretty loud, as people are apt to talk when they get into argument. I paid

no attention till I started up the ladder, when I noticed that Robbins was there, speaking excitedly. It made me a little curious, and it was so loud I thought it public property anyhow, so I stopped and listened. They were arguing about predestination and election. It was hot, I tell you. Robbins was holding that our actions were all laid out for us beforehand, and that we are neither responsible nor able to help ourselves. Larkin was insisting that we are all free agents, and the mids were putting in on both sides. Of course, neither could bring forward any proofs, so the argument consisted of nothing but warm assertions. 'I'll be d—d if it is!' said Larkin. 'I'll be d—d if it isn't!' said Robbins; and he banged the table with his fist. I thought that if they were taken at their word, one of them at least, would be in a bad way hereafter and I came away. I heard some of the young whelps laughing as I came up the ladder."

"I dare say that's the secret of Robbins's courage," remarked Hartley.

"What?"

"Why, his belief. He thinks he won't die till his time comes, and when it does come he can't help himself, and that he can't be held to a future account for actions he wasn't able to avoid."

"I dare say."

After awhile Hartley asked Garnet how Dularge was getting along in navigation.

"Oh, so, so."

"Does he bore you much, Will?"

"Well, it's more instructive to him than amusing to me, I must say," was the reply. "Teaching him is quite a distraction. How universal is the reign of law!" he added, after a pause.

"As how, Will?"

"Look at Dularge. How big and important he is on ordinary occasions! How little he gets, in a tight place!"

"That's so; but what does it prove?"

"The space occupied is inversely as the pressure," quoted Garnet.

"Correct," replied Hartley, smiling. "Hence we infer that Dularge is principally gas. If so, why not?"

By six o'clock the ship lay off the river, and it was again perfectly calm. While she rolled slowly on the long groundswell, the officers scanned the horizon for a sign of the craft they had been hunting. Nobody wanted to see her just then, but no one would have been surprised had she appeared in time to spoil their new plans.

The sun went down in a crimson blaze of glory, which spread high up over the sky, fading away by imperceptible transitions into scarlet, red, rose, and pink, finally passing into blue. The sea was stained in the west with a bloody tinge. Every sign betokened continued fair weather.

At eight o'clock the land breeze sprung up. The yards were trimmed, the sails hoisted up to a taut leech, and the sloop stood into the mouth of the stream under royals. Now appeared the utility of Garnet's survey of the river. With his chart spread out on the signal chest aft and lighted by a deck lantern, the captain superintended the movements of the ship and directed her course. The wind blew from the west of north, as usual at night, so that they were able to stand up the channel close-hauled. At first they could hardly stem the current, but the breeze steadily freshened and momentarily the speed of the ship increased. From the bight opposite the creek the channel lay two points more to the eastward, conforming to the trend of the shore, and the ship was kept away two points free, without, however, touching a brace. With still greater speed she shot up the reach toward the point a quarter of a mile above.

All hands had been called to bring ship to anchor before they entered the river, and the anchors were all ready for letting go. Now the gear was led out and manned preparatory to shortening sail. A heavy kedge had been prepared to let go from the fore-chains, with a strong hawser rove through the chock in the bridle-port and bent to its

ring, and a buoy attached to the inboard end of the hawser. Special hands had been detailed to attend below, under the direction of Mr. Harrison, the gunner, who had received careful instructions.

The sail was all kept on the ship, however; not a sheet or halliard was started. In silence, broken only by the quick rush of the water under the bows and the song of the leadsmen in the chains, the sloop rapidly approached the point. They reached it, and over it could see to the left a broadening of the stream, like a little lake, where it turned sharply to the west.

"Drop the kedge, McKizick," said the captain; and the little anchor splashed in the water at the order that followed.

They ran on past the point, and the ship's bows pointed directly toward the bank of the cove opposite, into which she seemed bound to go.

"The helm, McKizick!" said the captain, short and sharp.

"Hard-a-starboard!" commanded McKizick. The wheel whirled round in the hands of the quick quartermasters, and the ship came swiftly to the wind. "Hard-a-starboard it is, sir."

Now the sails were in a flutter fore and aft. "Snub her!" roared McKizick down the main hatch. "Haul taut! Shorten sail!" Up ran the courses, down rattled jibs; up went the topsail clews above the yards, down dropped topgallant sails and royals. In a moment's time the spanker was the only sail set.

The men below attending the hawser now kept it fast, checking only enough to prevent it from parting, and the ship swung round in a circular curve, of which the hawser was the radius, as a weight may swing horizontally at the end of a line. Quickly her head turned to the westward, soon it was due west. "Steady! Stream the buoy!" ordered McKizick. The helm was righted, and another splash was heard as the remainder of the hawser and the

buoy fastened to it to facilitate its recovery were cast overboard.

Running now into the deep lake-like pool above, where the current was nearly lost in the volume of the water, the ship held her way well. "Starboard! Stand by the port anchor!" was the command. Still the sloop ran on in the placid pond, but by degrees her headway ceased.

"Let me know when she goes astern," said McKizick to the leadsman.

"Aye, aye, sir." "Very little way on her now, sir." "Lost her way, sir." "Going astern, sir," were the successive reports that rapidly succeeded. They were now about one hundred yards beyond the point, and close to the southern shore.

"Stand clear of the port cable! Let go the port anchor!" ordered McKizick.

The heavy anchor dropped with a dull plunge into the river, and the chain was veered to fifteen fathoms. The ship lay secure and motionless in her new position, perfectly screened by the trees on the high shore from sight of any vessel passing at sea. It was nine o'clock.

As soon as the sails were furled the hands were released and the hammocks piped down. Directly the decks were clear of the crew, who were weary of their labors and very glad to turn in for a solid night's rest. It was thought needless to set an anchor watch.

The officers stayed awhile longer on deck to enjoy the charm of the night and the lovely scene. The basin in which the sloop lay was about four hundred yards long and one hundred and fifty wide in its broadest part, and had all the appearance of a miniature lake. The high trees on shore waved their dark arms as though beckoning or warning. Off the glossy leaves of some kinds the moonbeams glanced as from little mirrors, making shining patches on a dusky background. Along the south bank a narrow black shadow fell on the water like the border of a land of mystery. For a few minutes it fell quite calm, or seemed so

there, and the glassy level water reflected the heavens above without a tremor, so perfectly that it seemed as if one could leap over the rail into bottomless space, and fall eternally. "An opiate vapor, dewy, dim," filled all the air, and bathed the faces of the charmed watchers with a cool and grateful moisture.

The captain stood aft talking with McKizick; and seeing Hartley, who had the watch, walking the deck with Garnet, he called them both.

"I was just saying to Mr. McKizick that we had an uncommonly snug berth here," he remarked, as they approached.

"We couldn't have luffed around without the kedge, sir," said Hartley, "and that makes the place good beyond suspicion. Hackett will never dream of our coming up here. I suppose he thinks it impossible to get so large a vessel this high up."

"Exactly so. The concealment is perfect, but the unlikelihood of our coming into such a place is better yet for our purpose. Mr. Hartley, you are pretty well acquainted with the nature of the country,—where do you say put our signal station?"

The four officers proceeded to discuss and settle a system of signalling intended to convey through the air from some lookout station at the river's mouth, the appearance and movements of La Hembrilla, should she return from sea. This took them some time. When they had agreed upon a plan, there was a pause for a minute. The captain broke it, speaking in a serious tone. "Gentlemen, all these plans and schemes of ours depend on one thing, which is unlikely but by no means impossible. That is, that Hackett may get back to the Haven with his band before morning. He may be there now. In such a case, our signal stations and all that would be nonsense. We must know first thing if he is there; and to find that out I have reserved you, Mr. Hartley, as being specially fitted by your

superior knowledge of the ground. It may be a dangerous duty, but I know you will not shrink from it.

"I wish you to take an armed boat's crew and a midshipman, and leave the ship at four o'clock in the morning. You will land at your discretion, and proceed with caution to see if the enemy is in his village. By no means undertake to communicate with the prisoners. As to the number of men you take along, use your judgment, but leave enough to pull the boat across the river and out of the way, in case you are captured. In that event, you and the men with you, must discharge your fire-arms as a signal, which must be repeated by the men left in the boat. If there is no enemy present, you will hoist your colors in returning to the ship, but if you have found him, leave them down, that we may know and lose no time in commencing to get ready. Are my instructions clear, sir?"

"Perfectly so, sir."

"Then I will bid you good-night. I will see you off in the morning, sir;" and the captain went below.

As soon as he was out of hearing, McKizick began. "Hartley, I'm d—d sorry about this. Briggs and Larkin are too young and inexperienced to send, not to speak of Dularge at all; so it lay among us three. I tried to get the old man to let me go, but he wouldn't hear a word. 'Mr. Hartley knows the ground best, and he's quicker than you,' was all he would say."

"Why, McKizick," responded Hartley gayly, "I have no objection. I'd as lief go."

"By —," said McKizick, earnestly, "if those chaps happen to be back, it'll be no fool's job, I can tell you. It's very well to be willing to go, but you must take care of yourself."

"All right, old fellow."

"Well, I'll be on deck in the morning, before you're off. After all, they probably won't be back. Good night."

McKizick went below, and left the two friends alone together.

Garnet had resolved to stand the watch out with his friend, having a strong presentment that it might be the last. "This is a serious business, Hal," said he.

Hartley, now that he was alone with his friend, assented to the true view of the case. He was fully impressed with the danger he would run by falling again into the pirates' hands: he had not a doubt they would shoot him if they caught him. However, they probably were not back. He looked at the matter cheerfully, and determined not to be scared by nobody.

Garnet directly agreed with him, though still advising him to caution, and the two fell to discussing the prospects of setting the Dewhursts free.

After awhile, in passing the binnacle light, Hartley took out his watch to observe the time. Garnet paused by his side, waiting for him to resume the walk. The quartermaster of the watch was at the taffrail, looking through the glass from force of habit, though there was nothing to be seen. Not a sound could be heard, far or near: the stillness was absolute, and they involuntarily waited with sharpened hearing for something to break it.

Hartley noticed that it was eleven o'clock, and he was just about to put the watch away, when his quick seaman's ear caught what seemed a familiar sound. "Did you hear anything, Will?" he asked in a startled manner.

"Thought I heard something rattle like a block, or running up a jib."

"S-s-h! hark! Stand still, quartermaster!" In a few seconds the unmistakable sound of a voice in command came to them clearly. The words were distinct, though not loud, "Steady as you go!"

The two walked to the taffrail, and listened again. A faint noise came to them, which became louder from instant to instant, a noise like that of running water. "A vessel coming up!" said Hartley astonished.

"Yes," dry and matter of fact, from Garnet. "What in the world can it be at this time of the night?"

“Don’t know.”

The noise continued to increase till they could plainly hear the lapping and rush of the water under the bows of the coming vessel, which now seemed to be just out of sight around the point.

Suddenly a thought struck Garnet like an inspiration. Turning to the quartermaster, he ordered him in a voice that brooked no delay to go down the fore-hatch, and keep the men from coming up. “Mr. Young, go below, and keep still—at *once*, sir! Hal, go to the main hatch and keep the men below—don’t show yourself—*quick*!” Hartley obeyed, wondering, but without stopping to ask questions, for he saw that Garnet had an idea. Garnet threw the hood over the binnacle lamp, and joined Hartley at the main hatch behind the mast.

In a moment after, a schooner under gaff-topsails and flying-jib, came from behind the little cape below, glided into the cove with a strange stillness, and went in stays very near the opposite shore. Filling on the starboard tack, she gathered way and passed the ship like a phantom, with all her sails palely glimmering. She stood on up the reach, tacked again at its head, and disappeared around the bend above. It was La Hembrilla.

CHAPTER XXIX.

WHEN Arrowson was left alone in command of the greater part of the piratical band, he did not fail to see the advantages offered by the situation, and he resolved to profit by them. He had a feeling of mastery which elated him and filled him with a cruel satisfaction, the greatest mental joy of which his savage nature was capable.

Throughout the day he showed his delight by his conduct. He was brutally, jocosely sarcastic, when once or

twice he took occasion to speak to Mr. Dewhurst, and he ventured to pay Mary an insulting compliment, which her father dared not notice, for her sake, though it made his blood boil. In his manner toward the men, the mate affected a jocular, hail-fellow-well-met style, intended to be ingratiating. He derided Hackett, complained of the smallness of the plunder under his rule, pitied the men for the dog's life they led, and regretfully alluded to the good old times they had all seen. It took very well. He was touching them in what he well knew to be a responsive place.

He further showed his contempt for Hackett by neglecting all instructions. He set no lookout to watch the movements of the cruiser, and consequently remained in ignorance of her expedition's visit to the deserted quarters. At night he gave such careless, indifferent orders about guarding the prisoners, that a correspondingly perfunctory watch was kept; and the officers and crew of the Sarah and Jane, finding that their guard slept soundly beneath the trees, arose and departed.

In all this, Big Ben was Arrowson's shadow. Before going to bed, the two rascals had a private consultation. They expressed mutual dissatisfaction at their present location, and united in cursing Hackett, who indeed, could have hardly pleased them by any action in the world. After a good deal of talk, they agreed to defer any further attempt on Mary and Isabel for the present. The girls stayed persistently near Mr. Dewhurst, which was one obstacle, and another was found in the handsome quadroon woman, Juliette. Since Catarina had whispered to her, she had been furiously jealous, was swearing dire vengeance, and was making Arrowson very uncomfortable. She was one of the few things he respected.

Furthermore, a lingering remnant of the charm with which a physically courageous man like Hackett always sways other men less brave, still remained in Arrowson's mind, exciting fear. Markley would not venture any at-

tempt alone after his mysterious punishment before received, and the matter was dropped for the time.

They were no more successful in making a plan for destroying their chief. They plotted enough, but ended by putting it off till they could see their way clearer.

When Arrowson was awakened in the morning with the news that the Sarah and Jane's crew had escaped, he received it with indifference. He had never liked the trouble of ransoming prisoners, preferring to plunder them at once of what they had worth taking, and to save further annoyance by turning them adrift or shooting them ; and the disappearance of these impecunious men was a relief, in that he had no longer to feed and guard them. He did not, like Hackett, find fault with, and punish the watch, but passed their negligence over even making the excuse that it was "no wonder that they went to sleep, for they had been nearly worked to death." He saw how he might turn the event to his own purposes. He had passed an uncomfortable night on the floor, and felt more than ever dissatisfied with the bridge for a camp. The escape gave him another chance to show his contempt of the chief's authority ; and if that person should press him for a reason for the disobedience, he could say that he left the bridge because it was so difficult to keep prisoners, and he feared the Dewhursts, also, would get away. So, without waiting even to prepare breakfast, he gave orders to remove back to the quarters.

The band were well pleased with the new order, for the quarters was their home ; and they, too, had missed their creature comforts. They set themselves with alacrity to gathering up their effects, and in half an hour the whole gang was ready to march. The women carried little children and cooking utensils, the men had loads of provisions slung over their shoulders in the hammocks. The Dewhursts and Isabel were placed in the middle of the party, which soon set off with that peculiar absence of speech that accompanies early morning and empty stomachs.

The prisoners had additional reasons for silence in their apprehensions and in wondering why the captain's orders were thus disobeyed. Mr. Dewhurst was wellnigh discouraged at the fresh change, and at groping in the dark for understanding ; but he only hugged his pair of pistols, and hoped for Hackett's early return.

The mate was not with them. Carelessly arrogant as he was, he thought it well to reconnoitre the ground in advance of the party's arrival ; so leaving Markley in charge, he had gone on by himself. Everything in the glen had an undisturbed appearance, showing no sign of the visitation of the night before ; and Arrowson was completely deceived. he waited in his own dwelling for the arrival of the band, employing the silent opportunity in studying out a course which would receive their support, and when Markley reached the glen, he found that Arrowson had fresh deviltry ready. After a short talk together, the two mates separated, and strolling about, spoke earnestly and low with individuals here and there.

After breakfast was over, Arrowson called the pirates together, and bade them follow him. He led them down the brook to the beach of the Haven, and there made a speech.

"I wanted you to come down 'ere, lads, 'cause there's them habove 'ad best not 'ear what I 'ad to say.

"You've hall-sailed long enough with Jim Harrowson, my 'arties, to know what sort of a chap 'e is. What 'e thinks 'e speaks hout plain, 'e does, and 'e don't sneak around watchin' folk, and keepin' 'is mouth shet tight like a hoyster, like some as 'e knows. 'E don't trade with 'is friends and cheat 'em, and lay hup the money. 'E's afeard 'e might take the schooner and go hoff some time, and forget to come back hany more, like a bloody dog, and go 'ome, and be a big bug on 'is money, and leave 'is hold brothers to 'old the bag. 'E don't work men nigh to death, while he shirks and gets rich 'isself. 'E never 'andcuffs nobody down in a chair. 'E don't shet down on the grog.

'E goes for a good time, and for men that works 'avin' hall the money, and liquor, and women, and fandangoes and fun, they wants. That's Jim Harrowson, my 'arties."

The gang had been listening intently and silently, even those to whom English was strange seeming to try to read the mate's meaning in his face. They were a wild party, standing there so still in their gaudy dress, armed, whiskered, and with every sign of villainy in their looks, as they glanced at one another.

The mate commenced again with a lie. "But I never called you down 'ere to tell you that. I wanted to say sommat about the hingots and stones in our box."

The audience showed suddenly a new and stronger attention, leaning forward, and crowding up closer. "We hain't none of hus seen that box in a good spell. Maybe somebody might dig it hup and carry it hoff. I want to make sure it's hall right. I think it's too far from the quarters. I'm going to send for it, and fetch it 'ome, and keep it 'ereafter where we can hall see it, and know it's safe. That's what I wanted to say, my 'arties. Who goes in the boat with Markley?"

Such was Arrowson's address without its profanity, and it had a powerful effect. Its allusions were perfectly understood, its substance was quickly explained to those who did not understand English, and in another minute the whole party was volunteering. Those who were still friendly to Hackett, saw that it was prudent to dissemble, and they offered their services with the rest.

The mate picked out four stout fellows to go with Markley, giving them orders which sounded more like advice, to take the boat which had been left on the beach on the morning preceding, at the time of Hartley's escape, and to start for the key as soon as possible. The five left without delay, entering the woods to reach the boat by a short cut across with which they were familiar. The rest of the gang stayed awhile, talking excitedly in various languages and then went up the brook toward the quarters. A

38,

son let them alone, satisfied to let the leaven of treachery work. He was more than satisfied, for he felt that his influence had been increased, and while he was putting his genuine suspicion of Hackett to the test, he had taken a step nearer a position in which he would be able safely to glut his hatred and his lust.

The boat started about the time the Flying Fish got the sea-breeze, after she had lain becalmed off the key, and Hartley had made his morning visit. While the pirates approached the sand islet, the sloop was leaving it in the opposite direction in chase of the merchant schooner, and neither saw the other.

That day was passed by the Dewhursts in the *ennui* and wearing anxiety, which had not become less in the short time in which they had been on shore. Had Hackett remained with them, they doubtless would have felt more weariness and less apprehension; the mate's conduct had precisely the opposite effect. Only forty-eight hours had passed since they had been conducted blindfold up the brook, and thus with all secrecy introduced into the glen, without ever having seen the Haven or the shores around, or having any idea where they were; yet that little time had produced a great effect upon them all. Mr. Dewhurst lost his self-control, and let the women see his worst fears; Mrs. Dewhurst wept, and prayed to her God for a deliverance more speedy than was due her weak faith; and the girls dropped their well-maintained deception of gayety and ease, for the pitiable truth of terror and expectation.

At five in the afternoon the boat party returned from the key without the plunder for which they had gone, fagged out by the long row in the sun, sulky and angry. When they appeared in the glen there was an immediate bustle and assembling of the others, who plied the returned men with questions. Until Arrowson came, they got only short and sour replies.

To him Big Ben reported in substance, that they had reached the key at noon, and had gone straight to the place

where the treasure had been buried. Having forgotten to take spades, they carried along their oars instead. The sand looked as if it had been lately disturbed, and there were tracks all around. They had dug down with the oars, and had found that the box was gone. Then they tried to follow the tracks but had found so many, indicating that a considerable party had been on the island, that they had become confused.

When Markley had finished his brief recital, the whole band remained for a minute motionless and speechless, as if stupefied. Then each man, bursting into imprecation, looked at his neighbor with a suspicion in which was mingled dread. Each suspected the rest: each sought instinctively for a victim: each feared that he might be suspected himself. For a short space, that was a curious spectacle which was presented by the gang. Calling themselves brothers, and united as strongly as they could be by the tie of common crime, their bond of union was proved in that hour only a rope of sand. In the fierceness of their sudden passion and distrust, each seemed ready to plunge his knife into some other's body.

But presently they fell to talking, questioning, wondering, uttering the deepest maledictions, and swearing the most furious oaths of a dozen tongues. They buzzed like a swarm of angry hornets disturbed in their nest. By degrees the name of the captain was heard, and soon the gang had again swayed close together around the mate, who stood in their midst, the image of sullen, silent malignancy. At last they were all looking at him in their clamor.

Arrowson lifted his clenched hand in the air above his head, and a hush fell upon them. The women outside the crowd came closer, ceasing their shrill clatter, and every eye was fixed expectant upon him. He spoke to them in a rising voice like the growl of thunder. "What ought to be done to the man that took it? What does the dog deserve? How shall we punish him?"

"Death! Death to the traitor! Death to the captain!" cried they in answer.

"Aye—*death!*" spoke the mate. "Will you swear it?" he asked, rising to his full height and glaring upon them like a fiend.

"Yes! We swear it! Death to the traitor! death to the thief! death to the captain!" shouted the savages vindictively, brandishing knives and pistols in the air.

"Who has done it? Who took it, I say?" demanded the mate.

"The captain, the captain."

"Aye—the captain—aye. Who do you say?"

"The captain!" yelled the chorus in unison.

"Aye, and he shall die for it. Sharpen your knives, and load your guns. When he comes back, be ready; and when I give the word, kill him, and the sneaks with him, like dogs."

"Death to the captain! Down with the tyrant!" roared the gang.

Arrowson, who was now purple in the face from fury, went on in a wild strain, denouncing Hackett with horrid blasphemies, and still further inflaming the gang. When he got tired, or when his wrath hath spent its force, he suddenly stopped, and went to his house, followed by Markley. The motley and bloodthirsty crowd kept up its hooting for some minutes longer, and then dispersed among the quarters.

This ominous scene was watched from their windows by the Dewhursts and Catarina, with feelings that can better be imagined than described. Catarina, half-crazed with fright, made an attempt to run away down the brook, with some wild idea of watching for her lover's return and warning him. She was rudely seized, and shut up in the same house with the Dewhursts. "Keep a good lookout," said Arrowson to the men he had put on guard. "Don't let any of 'em slip off. We'll need 'em by and by, maybe."

At dusk the men Jackson and Peters came quietly into

the glen. They were known, or suspected, to be employed privately by Hackett, which would have been enough in itself to make them hated : but now they were looked upon with especial suspicion. Their arrival was reported to the mates, who at once went out to the fire, by which the new comers were standing. The pirates seeing Arrowson go out, left their houses, and rushed together around the two men with an avidity which boded them no good. They gathered in a ring about the mate and the spies.

Arrowson asked Jackson where he had been, and what he had been doing. Jackson had a story about Olozaga, and business with the priest, all ready and pat. The mate listened impatiently, interrupting with incredulous sneers, and when he had done, asked him flatly if he had been on the key during his absence. Jackson denied it. Then the mate put the same question to Peters, and received the same answers. He continued to question them, browbeating and bullying, as if hoping to force them into some admission, and all the while growing angry. At last he addressed Jackson. "You 'ave been on the key, and 'dug hup the box, and carried it hoff; you know you 'ave."

"Oh, no, Captain Arrowson," replied the spy, with a humble, cringing deprecation; "ask Peters. I haven't been there at all, sir."

"You lie, you dog!" thundered Arrowson, in a sudden frenzy, striking Jackson in the face with his fist.

The pirates around gave a yell, and threw themselves like a pack of wolves on the unfortunate men. In five seconds their bodies, riddled with stabs, lay lifeless on the ground. The slayers, unappeased by so speedy a vengeance, swarmed over them, and struggled for the near places; while for a minute longer they continued to cut and stab the corpses. They suddenly drew all off at once, and retreated, muttering, to their houses, leaving the two bodies so mutilated as to be unrecognizable.

Arrowson, who had taken no more part in the massacre than to look on in ferocious enjoyment, ordered the dead

spies to be thrown in the Haven, and went back to his house, remarking by the way to Markley, that he "was afraid they had served out those chaps too soon, they ought to have starved them awhile first, to see if they really knew anything about the box."

A few minutes afterward Markley reappeared, and collected a party of eight or ten of the strongest men in the gang, and had each provide himself with a stout lever. Branches of trees and pieces of firewood from the pile near the great kettle served their purpose. The party then went over on the hill-side to the big boulder that was one of the marks in the schooner's range, and laboriously pried it three feet away from its old position further to the south. This was done by Arrowson's direction, with a view, of course, to wreck the schooner. The stone moved, the party returned; and the usual lookout kept for La Hembrilla at sea, was sent to the station.

Arrowson had hesitated about taking measures to sink the schooner. He did not like to destroy her, for she was fast, and well adapted to his purposes in all other respects, but he was decided thereto by two reflections—that perhaps Hackett would be drowned, and himself relieved from the necessity of fighting a man, whom, in his cowardly heart he still feared; and that in case Hackett did get ashore again, it would be best for him to have no retreat. Arrowson dreaded the captain's keenness and readiness for emergencies, as well as his courage, strength of hand, and quickness of eye.

That night the band held orgies. The unhappy prisoners lay awake long, listening to the noise of the drunken revellers, and preparing in different ways, for the different dooms they now thought themselves likely to meet at any hour.

CHAPTER XXX.

HACKETT ran La Hembrilla off southeast, and, before the Fish was clear of the river, had got out of sight. When he felt well assured of that, he changed the course to the southward, steering toward Isla Bella.

He left the Haven with so heavy a heart that the easy success of his little stratagem had now no power to cheer him. He was too anxious to think about it, too much distracted to plan in his usual cool foreseeing manner. All that he could think of was that he was exposing Catarina to danger, with every hour he left her in the mate's hands, and that delay in getting his informers on board made it possible that the gang would discover the removal of their box. Saving the prisoners was a secondary but a strong consideration. He did not mean to abandon them if he could avoid it; for now that he had resolved to quit his evil ways, deeds of blood had become more repugnant than ever. The idea of leaving the young women to the fate waiting for them was painful to him. But with all his dread of the consequences of staying away, he could not as yet make up his mind to go back. His natural caution, fostered by early education and increased by the later years of a life of vigilance and danger, held him back like an iron hand. He could not risk a meeting with the Fish; he could not give her any chance to hurt the schooner, his only retreat. As well run alongside the cruiser and surrender, as to trust himself on shore with no way of escaping, for sooner or later the gang would rise and kill him.

He would not risk a meeting with the sloop, though he saw with a tormenting clearness of apprehension, how very necessary it was for him to return without delay. He thought that if he could get back undetected it would be easy, between carrying things with a high hand, and

allaying suspicions, to get the prisoners on board, with Catarina and the spies, and take a sudden leave. Never once did it occur to this singular man to do what would have been Arrowson's first thought—get the treasure, abandon everything else, and go.

In truth, Hackett was never meant by nature for a pirate, for he had a heart, and even now at forty, the remains of a conscience. Accident first put him into the nefarious life, cupidity helped to retain him, and his impracticable scheme for bettering the manner of carrying on the business, joined to the difficulty of getting away, had bound him fast. He had too many of the domestic and social traits to make him fitted for his lawless occupation, or to let him be at peace therein.

The result of the opposite forces acting on his mind, was naturally a compromise. When he got twenty or thirty miles off the coast, he was so fairly balanced, that he hove the schooner to and waited.

Lying inactive in this manner was the one thing which he could not bear. He watched for the Fish until three in the afternoon, and finally concluded that she had either gone on to the eastward in a vain chase, or else had failed to leave the Cobre at all, not having seen his sudden flight; and that he might safely venture back.

He started back with the intention of running into the Haven, but he soon saw the unwisdom of the plan. It gave the mate too good a chance to retain him against his will, for one thing. He was too weak-handed to sweep the schooner out through the gauntlet of the narrow entrance, in case Arrowson chose to guard it; and he knew that he would in all probability have to depend upon the sweeps, for the Haven was a pitlike place in which the wind could seldom blow. Beside, for what he knew, the cruiser might have left a party on shore on purpose to let him enter, and cut off his retreat. All the while his mind grew clearer and easier as the miles of blue water slipped away behind

the swift schooner, and as he felt that he was returning to action, to be near Catarina, to secure the treasure.

He resolved to begin the attempt by stealth, prepared to finish it by force and authority if needful. He would first see if the sloop-of-war lay in the river. If not, he would run up the stream as quietly as possible, and anchor abreast the bridge. There he would be concealed from the gang, and secure from the suspicions of the cruiser, whose absence would indicate that she was still searching for him in the southeast. He would take all his men across to the bridge encampment through the woods ; and if there were a chance, he would get the persons he wanted away and on board the schooner by stealth. He knew that Arrowson was careless at all times, and expected that he would be doubly negligent while insubordinate. Then the gang would probably be sleeping soundly, tired by another day's labor at transportation. If his presence were discovered, he would have ten well-armed ready men on hand to support him against the surprised band, five or six of whom he was sure were friendly to him. With a dash and a bold front, he could scatter the crowd into the woods, and before they recovered, could get away with the people he wanted. "Once let me get 'em in the schooner," he thought, "and Arrowson may whistle for me. Musketry won't stop me from going down the river, and they've got no boats."

While he thought and planned, he kept *La Hembrilla* over to the westward, so as to approach the river from that side, and make it unlikely he would be seen by any lookout the mate might keep, or by the cruiser in case she still lay in the *Cobre*. He got the land breeze at nine o'clock, being then below the horizon southwest of the river-mouth, stood over to the *Cobre* at once, looked in, saw nothing of the ship, and entered boldly. The breeze was fresh and favorable. *La Hembrilla* ran up fast, and as each hundred yards was left behind, the captain breathed more freely, to think he was still undiscovered. As he

had expected, the mate had not posted any lookout on the creek. He knew it, for such a one would have been sure to hail. After the creek was passed he felt almost gleeful. Arrowson would have had a guard there if anywhere on the river.

He was now so sure, that he relaxed a little, and ventured to set the flying-jib, so as to give the schooner better way through the water, and insure her going about promptly around the point above. He had taken her up the river before, and knew that the swift current setting around the point made it rather a bad place for tacking. The men on board knew it, too, and were all waiting at their stations before the schooner reached the place.

In their interest and slight excitement, their attention was fixed upon their own movements; so when *La Hembrilla* shot past the point into the swift current that swept around it, no one saw the silent sloop-of-war which lay so near. An idea struck Hackett, that it would be better, instead of going about in the rush of the current, to stand on into the comparatively dead water of the cove, where staying would be a certainty, and whence one long stretch would carry the schooner through the reach above; so he delayed putting down the helm, which he had taken into his own hands. The men were surprised at that, and looked at him instead of elsewhere. They ran into the cove, and went about so near the shore, that the flying jib-boom almost brushed the drooping branches of the trees. This left the sloop behind them, and gave the men still more to notice at home; while Hackett, usually so quick to see all, was absorbed in his duty of helmsman. The schooner actually had her sheets trimmed on the other tack, before a soul on board saw the sloop.

Hackett, startled as he was, almost by instinct pursued the only course left him. He saw that he had not room to turn, while a hundred yards above the river was wide; and he was sure the man-of-war could not clear away her battery in time to stop him on his quick return. His crew

were silent with dismay, as they were borne smoothly past the unforeseen foe.

The pirate captain, cool as an iceberg and steady as a mountain after his first shock of surprise, scrutinized the Fish with closest attention as he passed. His eye ran keenly along her rail, for above it he expected to see the head of the officer who would give the alarm. Thanks to Garnet's forethought, there was nobody in sight. A second incredulous searching gaze, convinced Hackett that he was unseen; the man-of-war was asleep.

"I *am* darned!" was his mental exclamation. "I never saw such a cruiser. I believe I could go alongside, and whitewash her, and none of 'em would know it before eight bells to-morrow morning." He quickly changed his mind about going back, resolving to stick to his first intention and go on up the river. So he steered the schooner straight on up the reach, to the intense wonder of his men, all the while listening intently for any sign that he had been seen. When they tacked again, and stood out of sight around the point above, he was perfectly sure he had not been noticed. "By thunder!" said he aloud, as he wiped the sweat off his brow, and relinquished the helm to one of the men; "that was the biggest fool thing, and the cutest trick I ever done in my life." He went on as if thinking aloud. "But that was tarnation smart in them fellers—hidin' up there—if they hadn't gone to sleep. I never give 'em credit for so much sense. But heow in thunder did they ever get that heavy ship around the point."

Without waiting to puzzle about that, he ran La Hembrilla about two hundred yards further on and dropped her anchor off the next point, in a favorable place for getting under way quickly. The head sails and gaff-topsails were quietly hauled down, the foresail and mainsail left standing, and then Hackett called all his men aft, and explained his plan.

"Boys, I've said nothin' to you about it, for you have

been able to see as much as me. Our band is all broke up. Arrowson has got every Dago, and Greaser, and nigger against me, and he means to serve me out along with them that stay friendly to me.

"There's forty-six men, all told, in the band since that boy Cato left. Three was sent to pass the word when the navy officer got off the other night—that's forty-three. We are eleven of us here, and all good men. Jackson and Peters are ashore—that's thirteen. Jones, how many more will side with us?"

The man addressed began to count on his fingers: Nils Olsen, Jan Olsen, Got Bauerman, Jerry Mason, and maybe Kelly and Sims."

"Well, split the difference and call it five. Eighteen of us, and most every white man in the band. Most every American, and Englishman, and North Countryman in the band. Nigh all the rest Dagos and Greasers. Eighteen of us, and twenty-five of them. I think we can lick 'em, boys."

"I can whale any two Dagos myself. The niggers is purty stout," said the man he had addressed.

"Wa-a-a-l," drawled Hackett, as unconcernedly as if he were stating a very trifling thing; "we're goin' over to the bridge, boys, and maybe we'll have to lick the whole bakin of 'em before we get back. Get your knives, and three or four pistols apiece, and lower the boats as quick 's you can."

"What about that cruiser, cap'n?" asked one of the men in a very dubious tone.

"He'll keep," chuckled Hackett. "None of you saw a livin' soul on his deck, did you? They're restin', and I'm thinkin' that before they wake we'll be out o' this, and off to sea with our shippies. I guess we all know where's a bit of a box we'll stop and git, too, if Arrowson ain't been too quick for us."

The men were delighted at the prospect of excitement which Hackett held out to them, and they were more than

pleased to think of stealing the hoard which Hackett so slyly held out as a bait. That settled their determination finally.

"Any of you want to take your gals?" asked Hackett. Only one man answered yes—a German who had a Spanish mistress, to whom he was attached. The rest verified by their silence the old saying of sailors finding a wife in every port. It would be easier to get new ones than to take the old ones away.

"Well, Franklin, you can fetch her. Now, boys, get armed quick, and let's make a start."

In a short time the whole party were pulling on shore in the dingy and the remaining boat. They landed, and stood ready to follow their captain. They were the pick of the band for size and stature, and with their belts full of pistols, they were a formidable looking little force.

Hackett stopped long enough to explain his intentions briefly. We'll go over to the bridge, boys. Jones and Franklin go in with me, the rest stop outside in the brush till I call. If I call, you must scatter and run in whoopin' like there was ten thousand of you, and shoot around lively. Don't wait if you hear me call, and don't pull a trigger till the muzzle is against a man.

"But I'm goin' to try to get the prisoners and our boys awake and away, without stirrin' the rest. Arrowson won't have any watch, and if anybody sees us movin' about, they'll think we belong there. I'll call the prisoners and my wife. Jones, you wake Jackson and Peters, and send 'em right down to the boat. Franklin, you call your gal, and the rest of our fellows. Come on, and keep quiet now."

They started in single file without speaking, through the woods half-lighted by the setting moon.

It is needless to say, that Hackett did not speak his mind out clearly to the men. He cared for nothing but his own results, and so he attained them, was ready to abandon all the men with him, as well as those who

remained faithful on shore. In fact, he would very much have preferred to start to New Orleans, with only the Dewhursts, Jackson, Peters, and himself, to sail the schooner. He could get along after a fashion with that little force, and it would enable him to take the treasure with him. If he got away with others on board, he would have to leave it behind, or else divide it among all. His secret idea now was to go just as soon as he got aboard with the persons he wanted, and leave those behind who happened to be late in getting to the river bank. This was not as cold-hearted as it seemed, for he knew they could all make their escape in the night, and join other bands.

He meant to run out of the river at once, feeling positive that the Flying Fish would not have time to prepare for firing while the schooner ran past her from the point above. Once past, he would be perfectly safe: it would take the ship at least half an hour to get ready to follow, and in that time, with anything like a good breeze, he would be out of sight.

All this Hackett turned over in his busy head, as the party wound through the woods. They knew the direction in which lay the bridge, and had no difficulty in getting over the half mile.

Arriving at the edge of the circle, Hackett motioned the party to cover, and, taking Franklin and Jones, crossed the creek, and made a *détour* so as to enter the circle from the opposite side, behind the old house. The moon was down, and it was now very dark among the trees. Hackett whispered to his followers, to wake the first man they came to, and ask where Jackson and Peters had swung their hammocks. Then he advanced with a light tread to the old house, and, softly opening the door, entered the room he had assigned to the prisoners. He had brought a small dark lantern along, with his habitual foresight, expecting to use it in this very place. Now he lifted the slide a little, and let out a bar of light. Moving

the lantern slowly, he searched over the floor with the ray. He found nothing. Then he lifted the slide higher, and tried it again: the same result. He drew out the slide entirely, letting the full light shine into the apartment, and he saw that it was empty. For a moment he stood stupefied; then he was filled with fears for Catarina; then, returning to his common-place practicalness, he replaced the slide, and left the house to look outside. He walked down to the bank of the creek, and strained his eyes in the darkness to see the hammocks swung among the trees; and presently he heard steps on the bridge, and the voice of Jones saying:

“Cap’n, they’ve cleared out!”

Hackett could not believe it at first; but after he had walked around the place with his lantern open, he had to yield to his senses. “The darned fool!” he exclaimed. “What does Arrowson mean by going back to the quarters now? The cruiser ’ll nab the whole gang.” A sudden train of ideas sprang into his mind, suggested by his own words. He thought, “The cruiser hasn’t sent in yet—her position proves it. I’ll run by her, and if I’m not seen, I’ll heave to outside, and send the boats in on the beach, and warn the gang to clear out, that a party is right on them. My coming on them suddenly in that way, with a warning and with authority, will at once dispose them well toward me and overawe them. I can take advantage of the confusion, and get my folks all away. Even if the cruiser sees me, I may be able to lead her off and dodge her—but then she won’t try to follow me at all on such a night as this.” He started back immediately in the greatest haste, calling on the men to come along. They followed him as fast as they could in the darkness, and in a very short time they were all back on board the schooner.

Without waiting to weigh the anchor, the headsails and gaff-topsails were hoisted, the square topsail set, the cable cut, the vessel cast, and they were quickly standing down the river.

The pirate, though hoping and believing that his luck would again take him past the ship unseen, prepared as if he were going by under the fire of her guns. There was little to do. He simply sent his men below after they had trimmed the sheets on rounding the point above the ship, and took the helm himself.

The schooner sailed smoothly with the current down the gloomy river. Never had it looked so narrow to Hackett before, as now while he stood at the helm. In the darkness, the trees on the bank seemed to approach each other, and the indistinct hull of the man-of-war, appeared to fill up the channel. He closely scanned the black mass as he approached it, and with high satisfaction to see no light and to hear from it no sound.

Smoothly and fast the schooner neared the ship, and still there was no noise, no unwelcome hail, no person to be seen on her deck. At last—it seemed a long time to him—she reached her, the bows were abreast, the fore-masts passed each other.

“Commence firing!” commanded a loud voice from the spar-deck of the sloop-of-war. A long red tongue of flame darted from the side of the dead vessel. The stunning boom of a great gun came with it, there was a crash of splinters, and the schooner trembled to the concussion of a round shot. Another followed, then another, then several nearly together, every shot striking the hull of the devoted vessel. Loud voices followed in command. “Sponge! Load! Look alive with the port-fires! Bear a hand, marines!” and as *La Hembrilla* still glided on, a bright light suddenly filled the air.

Hackett turning to face the ship clearly visible now on his starboard quarter, shook his clenched fist at her, and shouted defiantly, “Aye, fire away, you damned cowards! One man against a ship—but you haven’t got me yet! Fire—”

His voice was drowned in a volley of musketry, and a gust of bullets pattered on the water and struck the

schooner. "On deck, men!" roared Hackett. "On deck and jibe her!" The pirates darted up obedient, swearing wildly. Still the schooner ran on, as though she bore a charmed life. She reached the point, her helm was put over, her sails jibed, and she stood on down the river. From the ship, Hackett heard at intervals the thundering orders of the first lieutenant. "Hoist away the headsails, fore topsail, topgall'n't sail, and royal! Sheets to the mark! Slip the cable! walk away with the spring!" He heard the short rattle of running chain, and directly the sloop appeared around the point in full pursuit. The schooner had less than half a mile the start.

Hackett had by this time regained his coolness. He made a rapid inspection of the damage done, and found to his joy that the spars were unhurt and the vessel still tight, though several shot had gone through her. She was almost as well fit for sea as ever, though riddled and defaced, and he did not despair.

But the ship left him no peace. The ominous tongue of flame darted again, followed by its heavy boom, this time from a bow gun, and a shot whistled through the air. "Never mind, lads; the stern of a running vessel is hard to hit on a dark night," said he, with a laugh. "Steady as you go, Jones!"

Another boom, another harmless whistling shot followed. "I care a darned sight more for them stunsels than I do for the guns," said Hackett. "The cruiser's loftier'n us, and gets the wind better over the trees." The sloop had just set all her starboard studding-sails, which Hackett had observed. He watched her closely.

Boom! went another gun, and the shot skipped past on the water, throwing the spray on her deck. "Better," remarked Hackett, calmly; "try it again." *Boom!* came his answer, this time completing itself by a sharp crash aloft, and a sound of splinters falling on deck. The peak of the schooner's mainsail dropped, and her gaff-topsail fluttered loose like a misshapen banner. "I veow! This won't do.

Go up there, Franklin, and let me know what was hit." The man obeyed, and presently he sung out that the peak halliards were cut, and he thought the gaff was struck. Hackett knew there was no use in trying to repair the injured rope, so he ordered Franklin to stow the topsail, while he went himself to get a new rope, which could be rove as peak halliards. By the time he had it ready, he could clearly see that the ship had gained on him; and two more shots came whistling by. He could not reeve the new halliards without lowering the gaff, which would deprive them of that part of the mainsail left standing, and reduce the schooner's speed still more. Seeing that he had nothing to spare, he held on, hoping against hope for something to free him from the persistent and gaining enemy.

By this time *La Hembrilla* was nearly out of the river. Hackett knew that her course was nearly run, unless he could get her into the Haven; for otherwise he would soon have to choose between surrendering or beaching her. With little hope of a reply, he had the usual signal to light up the range burned. To his surprise and joy, the green light hardly commenced to hiss, before he saw the two lanterns appear. This comforted him for a minute, though it showed him only how to escape from one enemy into the hands of another. He soon gave up the hope of even the poor chance which that afforded. The ship was steadily gaining, and her shot were coming closer as she did. He saw that very soon he must run ashore or lose the chance to do so.

Closer and closer crept the ship. A shot entered aft, and travelled nearly through the wretched schooner. Still Hackett held on. Nearer came the ship. She was now so close that the gurgle of the water under her bows could be heard. Her lofty spars towered in the night air with sail piled on sail. Still the bow guns kept up alternately their pitiless flash and boom. Shot after shot struck the schooner's stern, or whistled over her deck, cutting ropes in its passage, or dashed its spray on the fleeing pirates. Hackett

stood manfully to his course, however, until the ship was within two hundred yards, and his men began to insist imperatively on his beaching the schooner and giving them a chance for their lives. He ordered the helm put over, and the schooner had begun to pay around toward the shore, when suddenly a thrilling cry rang the air from the deck of the pursuing vessel. "Man overboard!"

In an instant there followed a thunder of commands in a voice Hackett remembered, and a confusion of smaller sounds. He saw the chaser swing around to the wind, with her studding-sails flapping.

"Put her back where she was—on the range, Jones! That saves her; but I'm tarnation afraid she's too much shot up to be worth saving." The little schooner resumed her former course, and it seemed to Hackett that she ran faster as he breathed more freely.

But his troubles were not over yet. Peering ahead with the glass in his usual wary manner, it seemed to him that the schooner was not on the right track. He had so often run through their dangerous water path, by night and by day, that he knew that particular half mile wonderfully well. He knew in what directions he ought to hear the washing of the waves on certain rocks; he knew how the crest of the hill ought to bear. He seemed to have, just there, a sixth sense which marked the way for him by many signs. To-night something seemed wrong, and it did not take him long to suspect. "Jones," said he, addressing the helmsman, "we're too nigh in shore."

"There's the range, captain."

"I believe that devil Arrowson has put the lamps on wrong. I hear the surf too plain, and I missed the wash on the big flat rock." He ran toward the bows with his glass, and levelled it. It revealed an obscure, shapeless something in the water, not fifty yards away. "Hard a larboard!" he commanded, with a quick decision. The schooner responded readily to her helm, and just in time, for as she passed the rock her bottom grazed its sunken

part. "Hard a starboard! Steady! Steady so!" were then the orders. The helmsman chose a star in line with the fore-rigging, and steered the schooner by it, as straight as a bullet flies through the air.

After the last peril, they reached their difficult destination without further harm. Lowering the sails in the entrance, two sweeps were manned, and the vessel slowly propelled to the centre of the basin, where her anchor was dropped.

The pirates along the shore, attracted to the beach by the firing, watched the pursuit with eager delight, sure that the cruiser was about to capture their recreant leader; and when the chase was so suddenly given up, they continued to gaze at La Hembrilla, the wounded one, as she ran along, expecting at every instant to see her strike the rocks. To their wonder and disappointment, she passed on unharmed, and entered the Haven.

La Hembrilla had escaped out of the subtle ambush of her legal foe; she had passed through all the dangers of the close hot chase, had detected and avoided the snare of treachery, and lay once more, as if at peace, within her old resting place.

Arrowson placed a man in the hut to keep watch, and hurriedly drew off his forces to the glen.

Hackett waited till dawn, and then set to work to mend the injured gaff, to splice cut rigging, to reeve new running gear, and to repair other damages, as far as possible with the means at hand.

He was resolved upon his course—as fixed as adamant. He was a desperate man. Those with him, seeing the straits into which he had been forced, and believing that his fate would be theirs for weal or woe, made up their minds to stand by him to the death.

At about ten o'clock the repairs were done. Hackett and his men, armed to the teeth, got into their two boats, and pulled boldly and rapidly ashore, through the heavy rain then falling. He landed, had the boats hauled up on the sand as was customary, and passing through the hut

just vacated by Arrowson's spy, went on up the brook and entered the glen.

He saw that he was expected, for men with arms in their hands stood looking at him and his party from the door of every house. Arrowson, followed by a dozen pirates, strode forward to meet him.

CHAPTER XXXI.

HARTLEY gazed at the schooner as she sailed past in that silent, mysterious manner, with feelings at first of astonishment and stupefaction, then of pleasure at having the long-sought dextrous buccaneer securely blockaded.

He remembered, too, that (as they all supposed) the Dewhursts were prisoners on board; but he had no time to think either of their danger or their rescue. La Hembrilla quickly disappeared around the wooded point above, and brought his thinking space to an end.

"Now we have him," he exclaimed. "Will, see the hammocks cleared away, and the men by the guns. Young gentleman!" addressing the midshipman of the watch, who was now peering curiously over the hatch combings, "tell the captain that La Hembrilla has just run by us up the river, and I am clearing away the battery. Then call all the officers—quick as you play!" The quartermaster, who now came running aft, was interrupted in his wonder-struck report, by an order to assist Garnet.

In half a minute more the ship was in a buzz of restrained and repressed excitement. The men learned from the quartermaster that the schooner had gone by, and they rushed at their work with a feverish haste and quietness, each in his station hurrying through his allotted part of the preparations for battle. Meanwhile, the half-dressed, but

very wide-awake officers joined their divisions, and made the work go on all the more rapidly.

Hartley was presently relieved by McKizick, and went to take command of his own guns on the deck below. He could not help thinking, during his busy oversight, that he was perhaps preparing harm for the girl he loved. He attended only the more closely to his duty, but he could not shake off that consciousness.

When the guns were all ready for firing, which was very soon, the word was passed along from man to man that everybody was wanted on the quarter-deck. The crew pressed up the ladder from the dark battery below, crowded aft in a body, and waited.

Captain Merritt was on the other side of the deck, and he walked to the capstan and addressed them in a low but distinct voice. "My lads, this is the only good chance we have had;—we musn't lose it. I want you all to keep quiet, and not give that fellow notice we are getting ready for him. We are going to get everything ready now, and nobody must forget himself and sing out.

"Mr. McKizick, the topmen will loose the sails, but keep them stopped up on the yards; and they will see all clear aloft for sheeting home and hoisting. Then they'll lay down without orders, and the captains will report all ready to you.

"The afterguard will get up a five-inch hawser and pass it out of the after chock. The forecastle men will carry it forward and bend it on to the chain for a spring. The armorer will unshackle abaft the compressor. All the gear must be lead out or laid down clear for running. Let the men go at it, sir."

"Aye, aye, sir. Lay aloft, topmen. Young gentlemen, you can keep out of the tops to-night. Afterguard, fetch the end of a five-inch hawser up from the reel, and stick it out aft." The crew went so vigorously at the work, that in fifteen minutes it was done; and they were sent below again to stand by their guns.

There they waited, talking in whispers, and peering out of the ports up the stream for a sign of the schooner returning.

The lights of the ship had been all extinguished, and the battle lanterns left unlit, the better to deceive. The officers of the gun divisions, Hartley, Garnet, and Briggs, stood together, impatient, in the paler gloom by the main hatch, one of them letting fall now and then inconsequential but anxious words. It came over Hartley's poetic mind in one flash that it was an atmosphere tremulous as with conspiracy which he was breathing in that whispering darkness. He was too much dreading for Mary, however, now that he had time to think and feel, to linger over any mere fancy. He trembled to think of her prolonged peril, and the idea of the schooner's trying to pass down the river again under the sloop's fire filled him with sickening apprehensions. His shaken nerves and dis-tempered imagination presented to his eyes the bleeding body of his dear love, torn and disfigured by the merciless missiles of her friends, perhaps of her lover himself. If he could have known that Mary was not in the schooner, he would have been spared what he in after years looked back upon as the most wretched feeling of his life.

Finding that the pirate did not immediately reappear, Captain Merritt permitted the crews to sit or lie down about their respective guns, and the officers to go on the spar-deck, so they would not be wearied out in waiting, while at the same time, every one would be ready to go to his station at a moment's notice. The men by degrees dropped off to sleep; the officers talked, and yawned, and nodded; the lookouts watched the bend of the river.

This was the situation. The guns were all loaded, primed, and aimed, so as to strike the hull of any passing vessel. The lights had all been put out or hooded, and the ship was gloomy and still. Each man was at his station, or very near it, ready for a call. The marines were lying down on the spar-deck, with their loaded muskets stacked.

Port-fires had been prepared, so that they could be lighted with the least delay, and the neighboring parts of the river illuminated. The sails were loosed and ready for setting, without showing it, and everything was prepared to let go the chain, and to whirl the ship's head around with the quarter spring. So all waited.

Hartley did not grow weary or yawn, any more than Garnet did: he could not. He watched for the appearance of the schooner with the same dreadful impatience that a man might have felt who, in an oarless boat, drifting down a swift winding stream lined with unbroken vertical cliffs, listened to the sound of the cataract he was approaching, strove vainly to guess its distance, and longed to reach it soon. Without avail were Garnet's efforts to cheer him up. Hartley felt the insincerity of his friend's professions, and wondered how he could so stoically bear the prospect of harm to Isabel whom he professed to love; for he could not but know there was danger to the schooner, and to all she tried to carry by. And so his minutes dragged, apprehension giving them a treble length.

We have seen how *La Hembrilla* ran by, and received the broadside. When she came around the bend, she was instantly seen, and the word ran through the ship electrically. Every man was at his station in ten seconds, keenly alert, breathlessly still. The officers and men on deck were hidden below the rail, all waiting, and enough watching. The marines crouched down with their muskets in hand. The quartermasters, squatted behind the wheel, were ready to uncover their lamps and ignite the port-fires. Sheets and halliards were led along; clewlines, clewgarnets, buntlines, leechlines, downhauls, and brails, were all clear for running.

Worst of all to Hartley in those few minutes while *La Hembrilla* stole softly down the dark stream, worst of all was to see his gun captains, hardly visible in the darkness to less accustomed eyes, showing their grim and eager willingness by their quick changes of position and tense

watch upon the coming victim. It was impossible to miss the schooner: no aim would be necessary: only fire the gun when she came abreast the muzzle, and the shot must strike the mark. His guns would be the first, the very first to be discharged: he might be the one to break his own lovely idol. In a terrible whirl of feeling he waited. He could not prevent what was to come; he could only stand still, choked by his emotion, unable to speak, hardly able to breathe. He still hoped that the schooner might, at the last moment, take the alarm and go back up the river, to receive only their uncertain port broadside; or might change her course, and run by them on the other side, which would give her a slightly better chance. But when through the open bridle-port, he saw by her white sails not fifty yards away, that she was still coming, the last-hope fled, and a horrible fascination crept over him. His affections and moral forces were suddenly paralyzed, benumbed by the long terrible strain upon them; and for the time he was mad. His dormant destructiveness awoke, he felt the instinct of carnage which lies within the best of us men as a part of our brute nature; he was possessed by a frantic desire to rend, tear, destroy.

The sound of the forward gun awoke him. Feeling as if he were about to go mad indeed, he left his division and staggered aft among the guns to Garnet. He found him exhorting the captains to steadiness. Hartley seized his arm with both hands. Garnet turned to see what was the matter, recognized his friend, but heard only a groan. Seeing his condition, Garnet made him go on deck, and himself returned to his duty.

By the time Hartley reached the quarter-deck, with a wild purpose of calling upon the captain to cease firing, the last shot had been delivered, and the schooner was clear. In the blaze of the port-fires, Hartley saw the pirate captain standing alone at the helm of his vessel, and he observed the fewness of the men who came on deck in response to the call for all. He was able to reason

that if all the pirate's crew were not there, the prisoners also might be absent; and this hopeful element of doubt mightily relieved him. He ran to his station, and assisted in getting the sails set and the ship cast, with a feverish hurry, as though all his chance now lay in overtaking the crippled enemy. As the yards mounted to the mastheads, and the sails spread their broad surfaces to the breeze, and the chain rattled out through the hawse-pipe, and the men ran away with the spring, and as the ship swung quickly around, and filling her canvas stood down the river—all in quick succession—he felt an unreasoning gladness, the relief of action after a terrible suspense. He would at least learn the worst, and end his doubts.

But when the firing was recommenced in the pursuit down stream, he was again miserable: and though greatly relieved by his new doubt of Mary's being on board the pirate, he was glad when Garnet came forward, and told him the captain wanted him on deck. Garnet was extremely depressed himself by the possibility of the Dewhurst family being in the schooner, and of their receiving hurt; and though he looked at the chances against both possibilities, and was never in one of his friends ecstasies, he was suffering. He felt more deeply for his friend than for himself, however. He had told Captain Merritt of Hartley's hard situation, between love and duty, which was reason enough to a humane man like Merritt for making a temporary change.

The seamen grew fiercely excited, as the sloop continued to overhaul the pirate, and they looked with savage delight to her capture or destruction. It was only a very agreeable hunt to them.

Captain Merritt, who stood aft with the first lieutenant, did not expect so much. They were full of admiration for Hackett's daring in attempting to run past again, and for the unblenching courage with which he had stood to his station, exposing himself alone to their fire. His scornful taunt, also, hurled at them as soon as the guns

would let his voice be heard, made them respect him. He had proved himself no mean prey, brave as well as wily; and neither of the two experienced officers expected to take a man of so much resource and resolution a prisoner. When La Hembrilla put her helm up and started to run ashore, Captain Merritt said, "There he goes, McKizick, just as I thought. The best we can do is to knock his schooner to pieces to-night, and send the boats in to her in the morning. Stand by to shorten sail and heave to."

At this moment only two of the crews were busy below, the bow-guns only being in use; and the rest of the men were all on deck, watching the schooner from the best places to see her. A crowd were on the forecastle, several of whom had taken their stand on the head rail. When La Hembrilla kept away toward the beach, the movement was noticed and all ran to leeward to watch her. One of the men on the rail let go his hold for a moment, when he was pushed from behind by another man crowding in to get a place. Overbalanced, he stretched his arms backward, and craned his body in vain. Seeing he must fall, he very sensibly leaped as far as he could into the sea, so that the ship might not run over him. The men who saw him spring were all paralyzed but the old captain of the forecastle, who kept his presence of mind enough to cry loudly, "Man overboard!"

McKizick was not in the least flustered, and gave exactly the right commands. Without hesitation, and in a matter-of-fact way he asked, "Will you drop the buoy, captain?" Then he thundered, "*Silence! Silence, fore and aft!* Clear away port cutter! Mr. Thick, take charge and go! Quartermaster, hard-a-port! Let go the stunsel tacks and sheets! Flow headsheets! Port main, starboard cross-jack braces! Brace up! Haul out the spanker! Forecastle, there! Haul up the foresail!"

As all the officers were on deck, there was quick guidance for the somewhat confused crew, and the first lieu-

tenant's orders were carried out almost as fast as given. Captain Merritt, who was satisfied that McKizick knew what to do as well as anybody, and was willing to trust him, ran to the quarter and with his own hand pulled the toggle igniting the port-fire, and then dropped the buoy almost at the side of the man in the water. He was a good swimmer, and quickly gained its support. McKizick's tremendous demand for silence subdued the rising clamor, and gave the crew their wits like magic. The ship came swiftly to the wind, and lay directly with her foretopsail to the mast, and the studding-sails flapping and ballooning all abroad. By this time the men could see by the brightly blazing port-fire that their messmate was safe. Coolness was entirely restored. Thick was lowering the cutter already, and soon the man was picked up and brought back, none the worse for his involuntary bath.

The schooner had been closely watched all the while, and though, when the boat returned, she was so far ahead as to make further pursuit useless, still Captain Merritt was very well pleased. He knew that with the Flying Fish outside La Hembrilla could not possibly escape from the Haven in her present crippled condition, and beside, there were signs abroad of an approaching storm. If she should try to run away in that, she was sure to be caught, judging by the chase to Isla Bella. "No," thought the captain, "he is bottled up safe enough for some time; and meanwhile we'll have our chance at him." He ordered the ship to be kept off and on in short stretches, had one watch sent below, directed a sharp lookout, and went down for a nap, much better pleased at the prospect of taking the schooner alive, than he would have been merely to destroy her.

It was about three o'clock. During the remaining hour of night it was darker than usual, for the sky was deeply overcast by low hanging clouds which shut out returning day. The ship stood backward and forward in front of the entrance to the Haven, like a sentry on his beat. The

omens of ill weather became more numerous, and their fulfilment began. The wind backed into the south and blew in vicious puffs of gaining strength, with heavy passing showers. Day found the sloop under her three topsails only, buffeting a rising sea, amid gloomy and angry appearances of the sky.

At seven o'clock, in spite of the rain, now almost continuous, most of the officers and many of the watch below who had been permitted to sleep in, were on the spar-deck. There was a general feeling that something must happen now, which brought them, careless of health and ease, into the open air, where they could watch the weather and the old man, the captain, whose will must decide their action.

He was up, also, engaged in earnest talk apart with McKizick.

The rain and wind and sea naturally had in many minds their usual depressing effect, leading some to think that nothing would be attempted, and others to look with doubt upon the success of any effort made with such bad presages. Habitual croakers found the occasion to their minds, and wielded dismal prophecies with great effect.

At seven bells was a sudden stir among the men, and a concentration of all eyes upon the quarter-deck. The captain had sent for the officers.

Hartley and Garnet came first, and while waiting for the rest the captain began to talk to them.

"Well, Mr. Garnet, all our fine plans for signal stations and for passing news along have come to nothing."

"So it looks now, sir."

"It was a daring thing in Hackett to run by us in that manner."

"It was gallant, sir. It's a pity such a brave, able man should be thrown away in the life he leads."

"I agree with you. If it hadn't been for your quickness he wouldn't have made the attempt. Evidently he thought we were all napping."

"Yes, sir, but I don't see that we are much better off for capturing him than if he had stayed up the river."

"Wait awhile, and you'll see. I am going to send a good force in the back way again, and keep the sloop outside to head him off, if he tries to run."

"I see. You are going to put him on an equal footing, a fair fight ashore or an even start afloat."

"That's it. He shan't have the chance to ambuscade the boats again; and if he tries to come out he'll be sunk in the channel. The race shan't begin, if I can help it." Turning to Hartley he remarked, "You'll not have to make that reconnoissance now, Mr. Hartley, and I'm glad of it. You'll go in with a force instead of a boat's crew, sir."

"Thank you, sir," was all Hartley could say. He was very thankful for any chance to help Mary, if it were not too late, and he wished in any case to know the truth as soon as possible. It was the only soothing left for his nervous distress and well-founded dread.

"I know something of what you must feel, Mr. Hartley," said the captain kindly. "Don't let your anxiety make you rash. Excuse my speaking of it here, but we are all friends, I hope."

Hartley could only murmur his gratitude as the other two officers came up. They were Larkin and Lieutenant Robbins. "Well, gentlemen," said the captain cheerfully, "we're all here now. The boats will go in after breakfast—launch and three cutters, Mr. McKizick in command in the launch. Mr. Robbins, you will take your men and go with the first lieutenant. Mr. Hartley will have the first cutter, Mr. Garnet the second, Mr. Larkin the third. Let's see—Twenty in the launch, twelve—ten—ten—sixteen marines—four coxswains—four officers—and four midshipmen—just eighty all told. That will do. Mr. McKizick, you had better let Mr. Robbins keep his men back at first as a reserve. You may have a desperate fight and need a bayonet charge to scatter the enemy.

"Your first object, remember, is to rescue the prisoners ; your next, to break up the gang.

"If they are all on board the schooner, or if you drive them there, force her out of the Haven by firing at her from the high grounds ashore, and I will look out for her with the ship. Don't try to carry her by boarding, in any event. When you have dispersed the gang, or driven them to sea, burn the houses and come back to the ship.

"Gentlemen, I'll not remind you that this is a chance to distinguish yourselves, for I want you to be prudent. Use your heads, and don't lose life without need. A bold rush may be wise and save bloodshed—but maybe you had better surround them and fire down upon them.

"Detail four midshipmen, sir ; and let those go who have had no service."

The officers moved away, seeing that their instructions were complete.

At half-past eight, as soon as the men had done their breakfast, the ship was headed to the westward, and everybody went to work to get ready the boats and arms for the projected attack. To hide their operations, the ship was hove to around the point behind which Hartley had escaped in the canoe. They dared not stand close in, because the squalls were becoming too strong and long to make it safe to risk her near the lee shore. Everything went on swimmingly in more senses than one ; for the rain was now very heavy, and a sheet of fresh water an inch thick was washing backward and forward over the deck. Taking advantage of the cessation of a light squall, the boom boats were lifted one by one from their resting places on board and lowered into the sea, and the loaded fire-arms, with their supply of ammunition, was placed in them, carefully shielded under tarpaulins.

When all was ready the crews and officers of the expedition took their places, and the ship gave her boats a tow-line and filled away. She stood deliberately into the mouth of the river as far as the captain could venture, with

the four boats trailing along behind her. As she hauled her wind, they cast off the tow, and passed on up the stream under oars. With the wind astern and a following sea, the current was little felt. They made good way, reached the mouth of the little creek in due season, ran out of the swell into its calm waters, and disembarked.

The column was quickly formed, with the officers distributed through it to preserve order and silence and the marine guard bringing up the rear. As before, Hartley found himself in advance, with the first lieutenant. The men were cautioned to shield the locks of their fire-arms from the wet, and the march was begun.

In a dismal stillness they tramped along the familiar narrow path. The trees dripped volumes on their heads, and in the open spots the rain was blindingly thick. The wind moaned fitfully in the wet foliage: the sound of the surf was a hoarse and menacing monotone, as inescapable as though proceeding from within each hearer. Little rills of discolored water trickled in all directions over the humus under foot. The branches of the trees hung down despondently with their heavy drenching burdens, and made deep shades beneath. The air was full of spray from rain drops turned into vapor by the squalls, and vision was limited all around by the misty presence. All about the party was gloomy, cheerless, discouraging: no one felt his nerves thrill and his blood run hotly with excitement and expectation. No man could avoid the influence of this contrary phase of tropical nature. The elements seemed to be laboring to restore the balance quickly, after the previous unusually clear weather.

Hartley had the same reason for depression as the commonest Jack in the party, and more. To him, like the rest, it seemed that no bright success of arms could happen on such a day; but, beyond that, he had his gloomy personal anxieties. Garnet showed no discouragement in his face, marching along as coolly attentive to his duty as if it were a common occasion and he were not soaked to the

skin. McKizick was perhaps the only tolerably cheerful person there. As for the middies, they were "swaddled in gloom."

There was not a very long time in which to despond, for McKizick stepped so briskly that they soon neared the glen. As they approached, a faint sound of voices, raised as if in dispute, was heard, becoming more distinct each instant.

McKizick stopped the column when within about thirty yards of the brink of the cliff, and motioning Hartley to follow, advanced to reconnoitre. They peered over the rocks together. In front of them were the houses over whose tops they looked, and a break in the trees revealed the source of the sounds which they had heard.

In the open space where Hartley had seen the fire, there stood, a few yards apart, two small groups of men, armed and apparently watching each other. Between the groups were Hackett and Arrowson, loudly and angrily talking at one another, and each supported by the men at his back. Their words were audible to the two officers, who saw at once that it was more than a common quarrel. They listened.

"You damned traitor!"—Hackett was speaking—"I took you up and made you, and this is the way you pay me! Settin' my own men against me! You ——"

"Where 'ave you 'id the box?" interrupted Arrowson.

"That's another of your tricks, you lyin' dog, to tell that, when like 's not you stole it yourself! Listen to me! I am going to punish you for this."

"Ow?" demanded Arrowson, with an insolent laugh.

"By main strength. If you want to get off easy, lay down your arms and surrender."

"Ho! ho! By main stren'th! Ho!-ho!" laughed the mate, pointing at the little knot of men behind the captain.

Hackett's reply was a loud command. "All you men that stand by me, lay along here!" and in obedience to the summons, eight or ten men, variously armed, came

darting under the trees toward their captain. No effort was made to check or molest them, but immediately others ran into the open space and joined the mate's party, giving it clearly the superiority in numbers. At this, the voices of the disputants dropped, and for the next minute their quarrel was carried on in a tone the officers could not hear. Hackett seemed to be insisting on the strength of his force, pointing to it, and talking earnestly; while the mate's replies were short and sulky. McKizick thought that if the rogues chose to fall out, he, as an honest man, would stand still and let them fight.

Suddenly a slender figure, clad in drenched white, which clung to her body and plainly revealed her form, appeared at the front of one of the houses on the left and advanced hesitatingly toward the captain. When she was about half-way between the house and him, some one seemed to tell Hackett she was coming. He turned toward her, and called in a solicitous voice, "Go back, Catareeny, go back! This ain't no place for you!" The mate laughed again; and Catarina obediently began to return, though frequently pausing to cast back fearsome glances at her lover.

Something the mate said directly after seemed to anger Hackett. He commenced speaking loudly and vehemently. "Go away? go away, and give 'em up? You fool!" Catarina stopped at the sound of his voice and started back to him. "No!" thundered Hackett, "I'm captain here yet, and I'll prove it. Why do you back up that fool, you men? The cruiser's outside, and with him for a captain, you'd all be nabbed inside o' two days. It's him has stole the box." There was an instant's pause.

"Jeames Arrowson, this is your last chance," said Hackett slowly and severely; "will you surrender?"

"No," bellowed the mate, putting his hand to his belt, and stepping backward with the instinct of danger. Hackett levelled a pistol at his head and fired—but just too

late—the crack of the mate's weapon preceded his by the tenth of a second.

Under the blue smoke Hartley saw the unfortunate leader sink upon his knees, and fall forward heavily with his face to the earth, while Arrowson remained erect and laughed like an atrocious fiend. It was the glimpse of a moment. Then came a wild short scream of vengeance and despair from Catarina, who was within six feet of Hackett when the fatal shot was fired. She darted at the mate like a pale fury, her hair streaming, her right arm raised, a knife in her hand. She stabbed him in the shoulder as quick as lightning, and lifted her hand to repeat the blow. Arrowson sprang at her with a fierce oath, mastered her uplifted right arm with his left hand, and, holding her off, struck her a crushing blow on the head with the barrel of the pistol he had just fired. McKizick saw her instantly droop and sink; saw the mate hold her up from the ground by her arm while he struck her repeatedly with the pistol barrel, heard his shameful execrations, saw him fling the limp body to the ground and spurn it with his foot; and he sprang to his feet convulsed and pale with rage. "Oh God!" he groaned. Then in a voice of vengeance he called out, "Follow me, men!" and started on a swift run toward the cleft.

In those two minutes the men had been working forward, full of curiosity to know what was going on; and like their officer they were half wild to revenge the poor girl they had seen so brutally slain.

McKizick reached the steps first and ran recklessly down, followed closely by Hartley. The first lieutenant did not wait for the others, but dashed at once, sword in hand, around the corner of Hackett's house and toward the pirates. His men were not far behind him.

The pirates were all commingled, yelling, stabbing, firing, hacking. Swords were clashing, women screaming, wounded men groaning; and the elements lent their unnoticed aid to the discord, in pouring rain and moaning wind.

It was a scene more fitting a world peopled with wild demons than one filled with men. Unobserved by the absorbed combatants, McKizick and the foremost seamen fired indiscriminately into the *mêlée*, drew their swords and attacked. McKizick strove to hew his way into the centre where he saw Arrowson, anxious to avenge with his own hand the foul murder of the girl. Every second fresh seamen arriving supported him.

Meantime where was Hartley? Not yet in the fight, though second in the field. He remembered the injunction of Captain Merritt about the rescue of prisoners—he remembered it with ease—and when he reached the foot of the stairs, he ordered the first man he saw behind to come with him. Running with all haste to the prisoners' house, without any attention to the combat, he set the man as a guard, with the simple order, "Stay here!" and tried to open the door. It was fast inside. Such was his anxiety and dread that he could bear no suspense. He set his shoulder against the door, gave a powerful effort, and burst it open. He rushed into the room with his drawn sword in his hand.

There stood Mr. Dewhurst in the middle of the floor, resolute as an old lion, holding poised above his head a chair which he had seized as a weapon. Behind him the three women cowered in mute terror in the corner. Mr. Dewhurst put the chair down when he saw Hartley, and his face lit up with joy as he stepped forward extending his hand. Hartley did not see it, did not see him, had not seen him at all. He ran past him, caught Mary in his arms, never dropping the sword, and strained her to him without a kiss, only exclaiming, "Thank God! thank God!" In a second he let her go as quickly as he had seized her, and darted out, crying, "I must fight!" "We shall watch you;" called Isabel warmly after him, and he heard her, and his blood leaped joyfully in his veins, and he seemed to hear the blare of martial trumpets. He sprang into the fight like a lithe panther.

Mrs. Dewhurst, the picture of dismay, asked faintly, "Oh, pa, what does it all mean?"

Mr. Dewhurst looked at her and the girls, uncertain for one instant, then cried, "By George!" caught up the chair again, and ran after Hartley with the unique weapon as fast as he could. No one would have thought him old then. Though he came of good fighting English stock he had never fought before; and now that the fumes of the spirit of battle were in his head for the first time, he was easily intoxicated. The stiffness was gone from his joints, and the slowness from his muscles. He pushed into the front rank of the seamen and wielded his chair like a Trojan. If he slew no pirates, at any rate he knocked one down, and he entirely demolished the chair in a very short time. Then he went back for his pistols, before unthought of, but when he returned the fighting was done.

It was an affair of three minutes. When McKizick ran to the attack, the pirates had already killed and wounded a dozen of each other. At first they did not notice the coming of a foe common to them all, and for a little while the seamen helped in their self-destruction. Perceiving the fatal error, they made common cause, but it was too late. Not above thirty men left able to fight, found themselves surrounded by sixty seamen who were thrusting and slashing so vigorously after having discharged their pistols, that the pirates could do little more than defend themselves.

Robbins took advantage of this. He formed his men near the brook in one nice rank, dressed them to the right, brought them to a ready, and watched the battle with patience.

McKizick could not reach Arrowson, who kept himself persistently near the centre of the pirate band, and satisfied himself by yelling instead of fighting. It was Hartley's bad luck to meet that rascal. As he came up he saw that the pirates were surrounded, and that the encircling ring of seamen was thinnest on the lower side near the brook path. He placed himself there and went to work.

Being a good rapid swordsman, he quickly disabled his first opponent by a cut across the right shoulder ; and he turned to help a little sailor man, who was rather over-matched by a big Spaniard who fought with a clubbed musket. Just then he caught sight of Arrowson pushing that way through the pirates. He thought in a second of the insult to Mary, and he divined that the mate was about to try to escape. He resolved to punish him ; and when Arrowson reached the front rank, he found himself confronted and engaged by the lieutenant. The mate had no choice but to defend himself, and he did so in such an able way that Hartley should have taken his measure better, and have been more careful. Instead of that, in his excitement he exposed himself.

They exchanged half a dozen swift cuts and parries, when the mate made a feint at Hartley's leg, and then, as quick as thought, a powerful vertical cut for his head. Hartley raised his blade to parry, but was a trifle slow. His guard was too low and not firm. The mate's blow beat it down, cut through his cap and hair to the skull, and brought him to his knees, half stunned. Arrowson raised his sword, and made a second blow to finish him.

CHAPTER XXXII.

PROVIDENCE was watching over Hartley, as it had been for years, in the person of Will Garnet. He had kept cool, as usual, had seen Hartley arrive, and had come around to look after him. His quick guard saved Hartley, and his lightning-like return occupied Arrowson and gave his friend a chance to crawl away. The mate parried the *riposte*, dropped his sword, and sprung at Garnet so quickly as to take him by surprise, struck him a heavy blow in the chest, and knocked him down. He ran straight on toward

the brook path, calling, in his powerful voice, "This way lads! follow me, lads! the schooner!" The pirates heard, and dropping their weapons as useless weight, darted after him in a row, disregarding the slashings of the seamen whom they passed. The men, bewildered by this unexpected flight, did not at once pursue, and before McKizick could speak, the voice of Robbins was heard.

"Aim! *Fire!* Recover-arms! Forward, double-quick—*march!*" One or two of the flying pirates dropped to the volley, and the rest disappeared down the brook. The marines followed pretty closely, with Robbins shouting to "Close up!" and the whole mass of seamen ran after the marines. With no one to guide them who had ever seen the place before, and unacquainted with the brook, they got into a confusion almost inextricable, choking up the narrow places between the banks, and losing time by each man's trying to force himself ahead. The consequence was, that when they reached the mouth of the stream, Arrowson had his men in the two boats, and was half-way to the schooner.

Everybody commenced to reload, which was an operation of difficulty in the pouring rain. A few scattering shots were discharged without effect, and there was loud swearing about wet powder. Arrowson cut the remaining cable and swept out, making no delay to hoist the sails inside. The seamen ran along the bank, and each one who could get his weapon to go off fired when he pleased; but the pirates stuck to the sweeps, and before many minutes were able to hoist the foresail in the mouth of the entrance. La Hembrilla forged ahead safely out of range.

Mr. McKizick went down to the extreme point, and saw to his joy the Flying Fish under double-reefed topsails, right off the end of the channel. The wind had freshened to a strong gale, and she seemed to have all the sail she could carry. While he looked, there came a dim red flash through the scud and rain, and the dull boom of a heavy gun succeeded it. "All right, you find old

barky," said he ; "I must go count heads, or I'd love to stay and watch you."

He took the men back with him, leaving some, however, scattered along in a chain to pass the word up to him, if the schooner should try to return. On the way he met Garnet, who had picked himself up, and, instead of joining the pursuit, had stopped a few men to secure prisoners, protect the rescued ladies, and help the wounded. By running down the brook he succeeded in collecting six or eight men from the rear of the pursuit, and he insured their presence by fetching them back with him.

He now reported to McKizick that all the women and children had decamped while the fight was going on, and were now scattered in the woods. The man whom Hartley had posted as a sentry over Mary had not left his station to try to stop them, though several of the less severely wounded pirates had escaped with them.

"But how about Hartley? Where is he? Did I hear he was killed?" asked McKizick in great concern.

"He is only scratched. He got a slight cut on the head," answered Garnet, without a word of his own part in Hartley's salvation.

"Well, I'm glad of that, now," remarked the worthy McKizick as he splattered into the brook. "He has been so much cut up worrying over the risks his sweetheart run, that it would be hard for him to get knocked over now. She's a mighty pretty girl—and we couldn't spare him in the ship."

"I couldn't spare him, anyhow," said Garnet. "He's in good hands now. The Dewhursts have him, and can't do too much for him. When he got away he managed to creep in to the ladies, and give them one more good shock. He was bleeding like a pig, and so used up he fainted away."

"Aye, aye. A man in trouble's all right when once the women take him in hand. I'm almost afraid to ask you how many of our men we have lost."

"That's the best part of it. Bobus examined the

wounded before I left—glanced at them—there's six, and some of them frightfully gashed ; but he says there's not a dangerous wound in the lot."

"But how many killed?"

"None at all, and we needn't lose one of the wounded."

"Good!" exclaimed the first lieutenant joyfully. "The old man 'll be tickled to death."

"There he goes now," said Garnet, as one of the frequent reports of the sloop's guns came to their ears. "Where is the schooner?"

"He was standing out when I left. The old man 'll stop him. What a pity we didn't get that fellow that killed the girl! Is she dead?"

"Yes, poor young thing, she's at peace. You didn't know that Hartley overheard that Hackett planning to take her before the priest and marry her, and take her home to her parents to live. She was his mistress, and they were very fond of one another. I hope the brute that killed her won't get away."

"Little fear of that—hark! Hear the old Fish speak to him? One comfort, Garnet, he won't dare beach her now, for there's an awful surf, and he knows he'll live longer to surrender and take his hanging."

They had now come to the glen, and as they stepped into its circle, the sun burst out through a rift in the clouds. The flooding silvery light struggled through the foliage overhead to pour downward and lie upon the earth in bright patches. Innumerable diamond rain-drops sparkled in the leaves. In one instant, nature, approving the victory, ceased to frown and cheerfully began to smile.

The aspect of the glen was sombre enough, however. The marks of the contest lay about plentifully. The wet soil trampled into mud, scraps of half-burned paper wadding, scattered weapons, blood stains, and the bodies of fourteen pirates, bore saddening testimony. All the wounded had been removed to the houses by Doctor Bobus, who was then busy dressing their hurts ; and the

seamen were showing sailors' respect for the dead by carrying them into the deserted quarters. The corpse of poor Catarina they had reverently and tenderly placed on the bed in the house in which she had lived. Not a rough seaman among them but felt a divine pity for the misguided unfortunate creature in her tragic ending.

Garnet went back at once to the house where he had left Hartley in the hands of the ladies. They had put him on the bed in the outer room; and, after the surgeon had sewed up the cut in his scalp, they had washed clean his bloody locks, expended the last precious drop of hoarded cologne water on him, put fresh pillows under him, and, by the usual refining feminine touches had taken away all hospital appearances and given to the room a look of home. Hartley, happy fellow, was doing extremely well. As he half sat, half lay on the bed, propped up with pillows, he looked pale and tired, but serenely blissful. There was a great calm in his so long agitated spirit, high tide of peace in his satisfied soul. The waters of contentment seemed lapping the uttermost shores of his being.

When Garnet entered, he smiled languidly and extended his left hand—he would not disengage his right, for Mary held it and softly stroked it. “I have to thank you for this, Will,” said he, in a slow, weak, contented tone. “I can just remember that you came in somehow.”

“Pshaw! I just happened along, and had nothing else to do at the time. I might have been in better business than looking after such a graceless scamp; mightn't I, Miss Mary?”

“I think it was the best business in the world,” said Mary, turning her lovely blue eyes on Garnet, and frankly showing they were full of tears; “you couldn't have found anything better to do—and I love you for it,” she added impulsively, as the drops brimmed over.

“That's too much pay for a little work,” said Garnet, rather uneasily.

Mary went to him and took his hand. "Ah, how can I thank you?" said she.

Garnet looked bashful and fidgety. He replied with hesitation. "You think too much of it—I did very little—only held up my sword—besides," he went on steadily, "besides, I was serving myself, for I care as much for that boy as you do."

Hartley gave a satisfied little laugh from the bed. "Thanky, Will," said he, "I'm not a bit obliged to you. It's no more than I would do for you. Come here, Mary—before I get jealous. Will—speak to Mrs. Dewhurst."

Garnet found that he had forgotten Mrs. Dewhurst's presence, and turned about to greet her. She was by no means aggrieved, being too happy in her freedom, rejoicing too sweetly over Mary's joy, to imagine petty slights. Garnet spoke to her, assured her that the Flying Fish would now take her safely on her journey, and then went with a sort of mingled impatience and dread to Isabel, whom he had not forgotten. They clasped hands silently, and their eyes met. He saw she had been weeping. "What are you crying for?" he asked simply, speaking low.

She murmured back, motioning with her head toward the lovers, "Poor Catarina! she loved him so." He saw that she remembered others then as always, and would not mar their perfect joy by bringing up sad thoughts.

Just then Mr. Dewhurst bustled in importantly, carrying a bottle. "Here, my dear, the doctor says I may give him a teaspoonful of this brandy in half a glass of water. A fine man, that doctor! Where's a spoon? Where's a glass? How do you feel now, Harry? That's right, Mary; that's the medicine he needs."

Perceiving Garnet, he put the bottle down, and welcomed him cordially with both hands. Then he began to hunt about the room fussily, talking delightedly the while. "A glorious victory, my dear. Where's a spoon? The band's entirely broken up and dispersed. Any water here?

Lieutenant McKizick says we shall all go aboard the Flying Fish as soon as the weather and other circumstances will permit. Hold the glass, my dear. He intends to burn all these buildings. There—that's enough. I can guess at the brandy. We shall probably catch the schooner, too. Here, Harry, my boy, drink this. You give it to him, Mary. He'll find it easier to swallow. Gently! Don't move too suddenly."

Garnet made up his mind while Mr. Dewhurst prattled on, and asked Isabel, "Will you come out with me?" She looked at him with some surprise. "I want you to show me the place where you and Miss Mary saw Harry that night," he added, explaining and somewhat beseeching. She arose, and followed him out.

"Don't look that way," said he, the minute they got outside the house. "Look dead-ahead." He wanted to spare Isabel the sight of a desperately wounded pirate whom the men had found in the bushes across the glen, where he had crept to die, and whom they were carrying into the house.

"Take my arm," he added. "This excitement may have worked on you more than you know." She accepted his proffered support, and they walked on together till they came to the brook.

"It was just over there," she said.

"Come and show me. I want to see the very place." He assisted her across the streamlet, and they entered the undergrowth, reached the great rock, and climbing up the shelf, walked behind it.

"It was just here," said she.

"Miss Terrell"—he spoke straightforward, but in a voice so shaken, so different from its usual quiet dryness, that she felt impelled to glance at his pleading face—"Miss Terrell, I have had only one friend since my mother died, and I am about to lose him now. He is going to marry your cousin. Somehow I've learned to care more

for you than I ever did for him. Won't you make up the loss to me? Won't you be my wife?"

She was silent for a full minute, and then replied in a low tone: "I am not sure of my feelings, and I'm afraid you are not sure of yours. I like you too well to risk doing you a great injustice."

"Isabel, you mustn't fail me now. I *know* I love you. I am not asking you to be my wife because I am excited. I made up my mind to ask you the first chance."

She made no reply, and he went on presently: "Tell me, can't you feel for me as your cousin does for Harry?"

"No, not like that. I couldn't, in years. I respect you and I do like you. I don't know—" she stopped.

"Don't talk so," he urged. "You and I are both alone in the world, and we are a kind who wouldn't require so much in each other as they do. We could be happy together as married friends."

"But we ought to love one another," she said, her sweet even voice beginning to break.

"Yes, and I do love you. Can't you care enough for me?"

"I am not sure—that—I do not—" she stammered, with a deep blush. "I don't quite know."

"Then why not try me?" he pleaded.

"I could not try you except all my life long."

"Dear Isabel, that is what I want."

"But I should be only a burden to you."

"A burden! a burden to me!" he cried. "Why, how can you—" he stopped and caught his breath. "I forgot—I ought not to have asked you—forgot—I am too poor—it was not right for me to ask you to leave your comfort for my sake." There was decision and returning calmness in his tones. He was surprised to hear Isabel speak quickly, "Mr. Garnet!" and looking at her, he saw that her face was animated and her eyes sparkling with tears. She held out her hands to him. "Take me for what I am worth," said she. "Who could refuse such a man?"

"What!" he exclaimed, astonished, but grasping her hands. "Is it true? Do you mean it?"

"Yes, I do. I am safe to trust you."

"You will be poor."

"What do I care?"

He looked at her with a countenance radiant as the morning, and she answered his look with no shamefacedness. "And will you give me a kiss, Isabel?" he asked, with a slight ring of doubt remaining in his voice, and as if he had hit upon a sovereign test for the truth.

"Yes, William," she replied demurely, dropping her eyes. She was a true woman after all.

Garnet drew her toward him, and in a very unlover-like manner satisfied himself with the proof. It was the virgin impression from a divine plate, destined to wear as long as he lived, and to remain in his eyes forever fresh and unblurred. He ought to have been satisfied.

"Let us go back," said he after a time, during which he had for once been soaring. "McKizick may need me." And he added simply, after he had started to go and had stopped to look about lingeringly, "I like this place."

Isabel had to smile. He was not like the lovers of whom she had read, all sighing, and flames, and passionate outpourings. She liked him all the better that he could already look away from her to the objects about her. She was the more complimented that he showed her she had made the spot pleasant, that she was already able to stir his affection indirectly. Yet she could not restrain a gentle smile at the odd simplicity of his words. He saw it, and his good homely face looked handsome, illuminated by joy and by his smile responsive. "What are you laughing at?"

"I couldn't possibly explain," said she. Then she became serious, and added, "I tell you honestly that I do believe I care for you, but it is not as Mary does for Henry. But I honor and respect you so much that I am willing to trust to the future. Anything lacking now will

be made up hereafter. I think I only need to be with you a little."

"I am perfectly satisfied with that," said Garnet. She took his arm again, and they walked back to the house. "I must tell them," he said, when they reached the door.

She made no reply. They went in and found that Mr. Dewhurst had subsided into a chair, and was trying to talk to his wife, and not to watch the young folks.

"Mr. Dewhurst," said Garnet, as dryly as usual, "Isabel and I are going to be married—some time."

"Lord bless my soul!" exclaimed the astonished gentleman.

"Bravo, Will!" cried Hartley from the bed.

"O Bell, I'm so glad," said Mary, starting up to go to her. But Mrs. Dewhurst was first and her motherly arms were around Isabel in a warm embrace. "You have chosen well, Bell," said she; "he is a good man."

Isabel's face was scarlet as she laughed back, "I had no choice, aunt. I had to take him to be rid of him." She added in a whisper, "I know he is good," because her aunt was looking as if she did not quite understand the other remark.

"Well, I declare!" ejaculated Mr. Dewhurst, who seemed just to have caught his breath again. "I never heard of such a thing!"

"I know I haven't much to offer your niece, sir," said Garnet; "I have only my pay and a very little I have saved, but with economy—"

"Of course, of course," interrupted Mr. Dewhurst. "It isn't that. You can live on your pay well enough. At one time Mrs. Dewhurst and I hadn't half as much. It beats everything! You navy men have such a dashing sudden way about you. I was always a friend to the naval service, however. Well, I declare, wonderful, wonderful! Give me a kiss, Bell." Mr. Dewhurst was so full of ruminations of the fight, and of his daughter's happiness, and of sudden pride in his son-in-law, that he was not able

to take in the new idea at once in all its magnitude. Nevertheless, he found time to renew secretly an old resolve, that his sister's child should never want while John Dewhurst was able to help her.

Garnet was as happy as a king, in his success with Isabel, and in the acquiescence of her relatives. He did not feel entirely at his ease however, and was glad that duty took him outside to McKizick. The first lieutenant met him with the piece of news passed up by his chain of runners, that La Hembrilla had tried to get away to the eastward among the rocks, and that she had struck on a reef. "I've sent Robbins with his men down the beach to capture those chaps if they manage to land, but here's little hope of the poor devils getting ashore. The gale is going down, but the surf's as high as ever; and there never was a boat could live in such a sea."

It does seem hard for them to be drowned that way after such a good fight," replied Garnet charitably. "I don't know but it's the best thing though. A thousand deaths would be none too much for that fellow who killed the girl—Arrowson's his name—and by what the captain said this morning, I doubt whether we could do anything to him if we captured him. If he only claimed to be a British subject, it wouldn't help him any, but if he's sharp enough to appeal to the Spanish authorities for a trial, he would get off. The captain says that by the law of nations, we have no right to make prisoners ashore, and he risks his commission every time he lands us. I have no use for a law that prevents the capture of pirates wherever found."

"I've set Larkin to work with the men and what tools he could pick up, to dig the graves. There's a plenty of provisions, and a little too much liquor. Had to put a marine over it."

"Pick a crew of the best oarsmen, and take the third cutter and go off the ship, Mr. Garnet. Report to the captain what we've done, and say I think we can get out to-night if the wind keeps going down, but I'd like mighty

well to see the ship up the river. If we can't go out, and the ship can't come in, we can stay to-night in the houses well enough. Find out if he wants any services over the graves, and let him know about that poor girl. You know"—dropping his voice—"her baby was dead. That Arrowson killed it when he killed the mother. The doctor told me." The worthy fellow sighed.

"Well, go off, and get back as soon as you can. I'll signal the ship so she'll stand over to meet you. Stay—here's a list of drugs and things the doctor wants."

"Before I go, McKizick, you must congratulate me," said Garnet.

"What for?"

"Miss Terrell and I have made a little matrimonial arrangement."

"The devil! Well—I congratulate you," responded McKizick doubtfully. "You're taking a heap o' trouble on yourself, I know that by experience—but I suppose you know your own business best."

Garnet ran in to tell Isabel he was going, and to say good-by. The new interest she showed, embracing just a little sense of property in him, was a novel and delightful sensation. He took his picked crew off down the wood path with his heart singing and the world looking lovely.

It did not require much time to reach the mouth of the river, for the eastern shore now made a good lee; but once beyond the point, the hard work began. The sea was running high, and the head wind was still strong enough to make its opposition felt. But the men were stout and cheerful, the boat a good one, the officer encouraging, the sun shone brightly, and the ship saw them and was running down to meet them. They gained yard after yard with a slow celerity, which was speed only in view of their obstacles. The boat tossed and swung between heaven and earth, riding loftily on the crests, sinking deeply, lost to sight in the valleys of the trough, in a variable, surprising, giddy manner, fit to make a landsman despair, and

wish he had never sold his farm to go to sea. The sloop hove to as far in shore as she could, and so near them, that with the aid of her drift, they were not long delayed in reaching her lee. It was a delicate thing to board her, for her massive motions, as well as her rock-like solidity, threatened the safety of the bobbing boat. Garnet accomplished it with agility, and directly the cutter was hooked on and hoisted to her davits, crew and all. The ship was filled away, and Garnet went into the cabin with the captain, to make his report.

"Sit down, Mr. Garnet. You look tired, but I know you've been successful."

"Yes sir; very successful," answered he, with a lurking smile. He took a chair and went on to report in his terse realistic manner, which left little to the imagination, though so few words were employed. Hartley's explanations to the captain, of the topography, made the task all the easier. Agreeably to the wish of McKizick the narrator spoke of the peculiarities and beauties of the glen and Haven in such a manner as to provoke curiosity. He also spoke of burying the dead, and told Catarina's story, and declared that it was a shame for her delicate body to be put under the ground like that of an animal; and finally he gave McKizick's message about coming into the river.

Captain Merritt at once said he would prefer to go in, because he saw that loaded boats could not pull off that day, and he did not wish the men to sleep on shore, in that place. "Beside," he added smilingly, "I want to make the ladies feel comfortable and safe, and Mr. Hartley—it would hardly be right to separate him from Miss Dewhurst and make him uneasy now. He has seen a rough bit of service lately and has gone through a good deal on her account."

"You may count me in with him, sir."

"What! Oh, no, Mr. Garnet, you are too solid an old bachelor to be affected like your friend,"

"Anyhow, I have the same right to want to see

the ladies safe on board. Miss Terrell has given me her word."

"I congratulate you, sir. Miss Terrell is a sterling young woman. A good wife is a treasure from the Lord—and makes a man none the worse sailor, say what they will. I see I shall *have* to go now—if the wind serves—let's take a look. I'm heartily glad we had no loss of life," he added, as they went on deck again. "That first attack was a bad business for us." A look at the compass showed them that the wind was now to the east of south, and blowing much less violently. "That will do very well," said the captain. "Put her head northwest by west, Mr. Briggs, and get the foresail on her."

While the ship was paying off on her new course, he began to tell Garnet about La Hembrilla. "You see the schooner has broken up already, sir; not a stick left. Give me the glass, quartermaster." He took a steady look through it at the shore. "The marines are hauling up the bodies now, pulling them out of the edge of the surf up on the beach.

"She struck on that reef over yonder, just this side the surf now. When she came out I was watching for her, and I made out our men running down to the point and firing at her. She tried the usual channel first, but she had to lay up too fine to fetch out. Besides, we were making excellent practice at her, considering the sea. When she went about, I expected she would run back and surrender; and I was glad of it, for I thought likely the prisoners were aboard; but instead of that she ran off to the eastward among the rocks. I suppose those fellows knew some light draught channel through there, but it was the maddest looking attempt I ever saw. Directly I caught the trick. They hoped to run through that," waving his hand toward the confusion of rocks around which the waves still raged and foamed—"and get a good start by going inside of Pescadór while we tacked twice to go around outside. I opened on him again briskly, and between the sea and our

shot, he steered a wretched course. They nearly cleared the reef, and they might have escaped us after all if they had. When I saw the surf catch her, I stopped firing at once. Her day was evidently over. Every breaker hove her further in toward the rocks. They tried to hoist the mainsail to give her more way, but they didn't begin soon enough. A big wave picked her up, sir, like a feather, and carried her in on its top, and threw her on the reef. It fairly flung her down on the rocks. Then every wave broke clean over her. A man had no more chance for life than a baby."

While they talked, the ship ran swiftly before the wind, rolling broad semicircles of foam out on the water before her bows. Soon the river mouth was gained, and she stood in. Directly she was in a comparative calm, rising and falling with a dignified motion, on the dying swells of the outside surges, but still sailing swiftly. The sails were clewed up and the anchor dropped, off the creek.

Captain Merritt took his prayer-book, and went ashore in the gig at once, leaving Garnet in command of the ship, with instructions to furl the sails, make all snug, and defer the men's supper till the shore party returned.

Garnet walked the quarter-deck with Briggs, giving him rather a disconnected account of the fight, and secretly longing for the face in which he could now seek his responses. His heart was with his treasure.

That did not prevent him from performing his duty, however. When the wounded men were brought off, he actively assisted the surgeon to get them on board. He had a cot slung, put whips on the main-yard and stay, and unshipped the main hatch ladders. One by one the hurt men were gently lifted in the air, swung on board, and lowered below, where they could be carefully carried into the sick bay. Hartley did not come with the rest, Dr. Bobus stopping a moment to explain that he was well enough to be up and walking about.

At about six o'clock a dense smoke rose above the tree

tops, and blew inland in black clouds. This continued in full volume for half an hour, when it began to die away. Then the captain appeared at the water's edge, with his boat's crew and the ladies, and shortly the whole expedition followed. Garnet saw that Hartley was carefully helped into the gig, in which Mr. Dewhurst and his family also took places, and after that he had no eyes for the rest of the embarkation. He watched the slender white boat as she came, dart-like, toward the ship, before her gay white-ash breeze. Soon he made out Isabel, and then he saw her only. It was a wonderful satisfaction to find that she was looking back at him.

He had had the side ladders shipped for them, and he went down on the grating to help them out of the boat. If Isabel was not very demonstrative, Garnet still found a sufficient pleasure in her sweet thanks for his small services, and in the warm grasp of her hand. He met his betrothed uncorrupted, and his pure fresh manhood was therefore sensitive to feel and to enjoy her slightest favor. The restraint of years had now a delicious reward; though to one like him it had been its own reward all along.

When they were all upon the spar-deck of the sloop, the captain took off his cap and bowed. "Friends," said he, "when you visited us in Santa Cruz, you were very welcome; but the welcome we gave you then cannot compare with the present. It is a pleasure I cannot express to have you safe on board, and to think that I have been the means, through my gallant associates, of getting you here. This ship is your home for the present, and we will try to make it a happy one."

"My dear Captain Merritt," said Mr. Dewhurst, "you will have to imagine how glad we are to get here. We thank you, sir, and the brave officers and men who have fought for us, and saved us—we thank you from our hearts."

"We don't deserve any thanks," responded the captain. "We have only done a very agreeable duty. Besides, I believe that some of us have been serving ourselves as

well as our country." His eye twinkled as it rested on the two friends, who were in near proximity to the two young ladies. "But come below—you must be weary—come into the cabin." They walked off, leaving the two friends somewhat disconsolate; but at the hatch the captain stopped to call back to them. "Gentlemen, I shall expect to see you in the cabin after supper. Mr. Garnet, send the carpenter's mate in to me, and tell the first lieutenant, as soon as he gets aboard, that I want to see him."

What a jolly crowd there was around the ward-room table that night at supper! What spirits they were in, and what cheerful talk they had, and how they laughed at the tiniest little jokelet! McKizick, when the meal was over, insisted that all should drink to his sentiment, and sent his own bottle of particular Scotch whiskey around. "Gentlemen!" he cried, "here's—at home or abroad, fair weather or foul, peace or war—Success to the Service!"

"To the new service, too, Hal," whispered Garnet slyly. Hartley saw the point and—smiled.

Then they all went up on the gun-deck and smoked a pipe—to our two friends the pipe of peace—while the merry talk ran on. Already the men were dancing, singing, smoking, yarning, and laughing on the deck above, enjoying rest and the proud sense of success after labor and fight. Already the uproar of the boisterous midshipmen, celebrating the victory by keeping Saturday night on a Thursday, could be heard at intervals from the steerage. McKizick hadn't the heart to stop them then.

Hartley and Garnet did not linger long with their lively messmates, but took their departure early, and steered a straight course aft to the cabin door. Dularge watched them with envious eyes, for he was still waiting an opportunity to captivate Mary.

"Will, old chap," said Hartley jocosely, on the way. "It's not surprising for me to be going on this errand, but you—I can't quite take that in—its unnatural."

"I'm a good man to-night, Harry."

"Sure of that? How do you know?"

"I feel good. There's so little meanness left in me that a million times as much wouldn't make a fair target for a sermon at ten paces."

"Why, you must be happy!"

"Happy! happy's no word for it. I feel like—a whale."

"'Very like a whale.' Look out, or you'll be spouting in rhyme next."

"And I owe it all to her—no, a part to your advice and example."

"Hush! here we are. Orderly, tell the captain Mr. Garnet and Mr. Hartley are here." The orderly came back in a minute and showed them in. They were met with cheerful hand shakings, none less than cordial. Hartley was at first the centre of attraction, all asking after his wound and urging him to be careful; and then they joined in a pleasant talk, all together. That did not last long, however, because directly Hartley forgot etiquette, and drew Mary apart into a murmured conversation, mainly interesting to themselves; and Garnet followed his example. The old folks did very well without them, for the young couples were walking over a delightful part of life's journey just then, which their manifest joy brought freshly back to the memory of their elders. Full of sympathy, they let the young folks alone in peace. The captain said to his guests, in a whisper, "It must be a satisfaction to you, since your girls have to go, that their husbands will be two of the best young men in the service." They could assent then, with no selfish thought of loss or sorrow in giving up their maidens. The times had changed. The cabin was a very quiet room to have seven happy people talking in it; though loudness is, after all, no sign of joy.

When eight bells struck, Garnet got up reluctantly and said he must take his watch on deck. He could not keep his eyes off Isabel, who seemed to respond to his unexpressed wish. She arose also, and blushing declared she

would like to go, too ; she wanted to see what the lonely watches sailors complained of were like.

Captain Merritt smiled at her. "Miss Isabel, I'm afraid you will never find that out ; for when you go to see, the loneliness must depart."

"Thank you," answered she. "You mean I should be company of some kind, even if bad. But may I go?"

"It is against the rules," said the captain, still smiling ; "but at a time like this we must treat resolution and let up on the rules. We may never have another chance."

Isabel threw her shawl on and went out with Garnet, who took advantage of the occasion to tell her, "The desert were a paradise, if thou wert there." It was a pity, but this was not the last time the regulations were invaded in the well-governed ship during the following weeks.

This was the first chance Garnet had had to talk for any time openly with Isabel. He relieved the deck, and then cleared the coast by sending the middy on duty to keep his watch on the forecastle, out of ear-shot. He had no mind to be overheard and reported in the steerage by an irreverent youngster.

Garnet was too sensible, and remembered Isabel's declaration of partial feeling too well, to run any risk by speaking out all he felt. He meant to let her see him as he truly was, without disguise, and to wait for fuller love to ripen if it would. She understood it and liked it ; but he was, nevertheless, pleading for his affection in many a way which she alone recognized. His unwittingly tender tone was a caress that pleased her, his watchfulness for her comfort, a support she accepted. He was well satisfied that the splendid creature he loved clung to his arm, walked by his side, listened and answered. He knew that besides love there are other things equally noble, which must count much through life to all true souls, and that might well serve as mirrors, in which he and Isabel could see each other's heart.

She told him about what had been done at the glen

after he had left. "Mr. McKizick asked us to see if we could find out anything about Catarina from her things. He wanted to know her name, to put it on a head-board he was preparing for her grave. Henry had told us about what he overheard, and how he suspected she might be of good family; and we thought maybe we could find out who she was, and send word to her relatives. Aunt and Mary and I went to look in the house she had lived in. Oh, Will, she lay there so sad. Poor child! She was only a child, but she loved that man so much. And to die so!" She stopped with her voice full of tears, and was silent for awhile. "The sailors had made a coffin for her before Mr. McKizick gave any order, and she had on a pure white dress. Mary and I went out by the great rock, and gathered some wild flowers, and put them on her bosom; and Mary took off her little jet cross, and placed it in her hand. Then we helped aunt to examine the bureau-drawers, and the chests, and the wardrobe; but none of her clothing was marked with her name. There were some books on a shelf, but they all seemed to belong to Captain Hackett except one, a small station book in Spanish—a prayer book—that looked old and worn, as if it had been used a long long time. But there was no name in it. She had handsome gowns, and French gloves, and ribbons, and pieces of uncut silk, and India muslin, and velvet, and two beautiful camel's-hair shawls, and a great many jewels, but not a sign to tell who she was.

"When we were captured by Captain Hackett, he was very polite and careful of our comfort; and he seemed to take a liking to Mary and me that he kept up as long as he lived. He had some real good traits, Will. He loved Catarina, and was tender of her, and Mr. McKizick told us how bravely he acted. He was very brave for us once." She turned pale and shuddered at the recollection of the night on which the mates had attacked Mary and her. "Perhaps Henry told you. When we were on the schooner he talked to us about Catarina a good deal. Once he said

she had got a notion she wasn't married to him, that made her unhappy. He said the marriage was not regular, but declared God would own it ; and he begged us if she asked anything about it, not to worry her."

"Did you promise?" asked Garnet.

"No ; but when we saw Catarina, and saw how sweet and unspoiled she was, we resolved to keep up the deceit if she came to us : but she never asked a word."

"He was right. God would own love like theirs, if men wouldn't," said Garnet.

"It was wonderful to see her devotion to him, and how good and sweet she was after living among such people."

"Did you go to her funeral?"

"Yes, all of us went, the officers and all the sailors. Mr. McKizick is more tender-hearted than he looks, for he would not lay her in the glen with the pirates. When he came in to tell us all was ready, and ask us to go, he said to me we would have to go up the steps in the rock, for he didn't like the idea of burying that pale pretty little thing along with the pirates, but up on the cliff she could watch over the place she had lived in, and it was lighter and clearer up there. When we went up, the sailors were already filling up one grave. Mr. McKizick hadn't told us he meant for Captain Hackett to lie by his wife. I believe he thought that in some way they would sleep better, side by side. Is he that way?"

"Yes, I have noticed it many a time. Did the captain read the service?"

"Yes, and he read it beautifully. Poor, sad little girl ! Some of the men and officers were crying. Forgive me—I can't help thinking about it, now that I am so happy.

"When we came away the head-boards had been put up, and we passed close by them. On one was, 'John Hackett, a brave man,' with the date ; and on the other, 'Catarina, wife of John Hackett.' Oh, it's too sad to think of. They loved one another so well, and now that is

all gone, and all each has in this world is a piece of board, which will decay in a few years."

"We cannot tell," said he. "Perhaps because they loved much, much will be forgiven. God may be more merciful than we are taught, Isabel. Such things as you have been telling me, make me feel like a Universalist for the time. It would make me very mournful, to think that a part of my punishment in a future world would be to lose the remembrance of you, and be forgotten by you."

"It does seem as if we were forced back upon such a belief for consolation, sometimes. Somebody we love dies, and it is not satisfying to be told that at the last moment he may have repented enough to be saved. We want to feel sure of it. There was my dear aunt, who died two years ago. She was a sweet and good woman, but nothing could induce her to talk about religious matters, and she didn't belong to the church."

They talked on together till nine o'clock. The sky was now clear, and the wind had fallen to a moderate breeze, further kept away from them by the high land and the trees upon the eastern shore of the river. A mellow gibbous moon rode high in the zenith, giving the greatest light and casting the least amount of shadow. The breeze was pleasantly cool and moist, but it sighed sometimes aloft in the ship's rigging, when a fresher breath than usual passed over the rustling tree-tops. It sighed sadly, as if it held the complaint of the voiceless slain. And the continuous rushing boom of the organ surf, played a long anthem for the dead, the yearning lament of the sea for its lost children, no more to roam the sunny wave.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

NEXT morning when Mrs. Dewhurst and the ladies went on deck after breakfast, they found the good ship at sea, almost out of sight of land, and running along to the westward with an easy swinging roll, under a cloud of canvas before a-quartering breeze. Everything was in a condition of almost painful neatness, from the pale deck, fuzzy from the holy-stones, and the snowy paint fresh scrubbed, to the glistening guns and the shining bright work. Since early dawn the men had been at work; and they had in the five busy hours of labor picked up the anchor left up the river, as well as the kedge, got the ship under way, and holy-stoned the spar-deck.

Mr. Larkin met the fair party at the ladder, and assisted them up with the greatest gallantry. Mr. Maskelyne, the midshipman of the quarter-deck, at once volunteered to bring up chairs, but they preferred to stand, and he got only an introduction—which indeed, was the astute young gentleman's object all the while.

The crew were enjoying their after-breakfast smoke. There was no sign among them of the hard service through which they had been, except that now and then a bandage or an arm in a sling would be seen. The tars were jolly this morning, haw-hawing at accounts of the late fight given by some fore-castle wits, and chaffing messmates who had been so unlucky as to bring away wounds as souvenirs.

Our two friends were smoking on the gun-deck, and watching. When they saw the girls appear they made a shallow pretence of finishing their pipes, and they went away together directly. No one in the party they left behind was deceived, except Dularge, for by this time the relations of the young folks were pretty well understood by nearly everybody. Indeed, Garnet had meant they should be, for he hated mysteries on their own account, and knew

how much a matter-of-fact and suitable publicity weakens the sense of the ridiculous. A meaning smile went around the group. "Hartley's the *luckiest* fellow," said Briggs.

"How so, Mr. Briggs?" asked Doctor Bobus, who did not smoke and therefore talked the more.

"He's always in luck. Anybody can see the impression he has made. Such a beauty, too—I call it a wound well paid for."

"Oh, Mr. Briggs," said Bobus, with aged wisdom, "you're young and sentimental yet. You look only at the rosies and posies, and love and dove part of it. I admit that it is a very pretty thing to see two nice young people honestly in love—don't misunderstand me, sir—especially when they are so devoted and good-looking a pair as our friends: but may be a man might wish after awhile that his wound had been fatal before it had attracted the attention of that particular woman. I mean no personal allusions, sir."

"Pshaw, doctor," said McKizick abruptly, "stick out a little more slack. A dry old medico is about as unhuman a creature as walks on two legs."

Bobus answered warmly. "You didn't listen very well to what I said, Mr. McKizick. I consider that the affection of the sexes furnishes our chief inducement to effort and our greatest happiness in life; and I said a minute ago that I admired the pretty sight of two such lovers as we have on board. But still, a young man might wisely use a little judgment in his choice."

"Judgment be d—d! I've no use for any young fellow that's cold blooded enough to go looking and picking over the points of the girls as I would a ship's. If all the young men waited to marry on judgment, and till they had just the right woman—why, there's one woman for every man, you know; and who would support the old maids, then? not the d—d old bachelors! what would become of the population of the world?" Doctor Bobus

replied retractively, and as if borne down by a weighty rush of argument:

"There's something in that—something in that, I admit. Still you can imagine that such an indiscriminate trusting to nature would make some men unhappy."

"Oh, the devil take the hindmost. Any way you put it, the natural way is for the greatest good of the greatest number."

"Yes, doubtless so, doubtless so. Still a youngster will make none the worse husband, for thinking what kind of a wife he will need, and what kind of a mother the babies will need, and whether he will be able to provide for the mother and the babies."

Dularge put in. "I would do as McKizick says at general quarters."

"How's that?" asked McKizick.

"Cast loose, and provide. Paint 'em lead color, and turn 'em out to pasture. Ha! ha! ha!"

Robbins spoke contemptuously. "What's the use of a man's marrying, anyhow?"

The doctor answered him. "In some peculiar cases, it is best not, sir—the man serves the world best by remaining single, and is much more comfortable beside—there's no use, as you say. Yours may be such a case."

"I believe you."

"I don't see what you and Briggs are driving at, doctor, talking about Hartley's luck, and young lovers, and all that," said Dularge.

"Is it possible you have not observed anything, sir?"

"Why, what do you mean?" asked Dularge, surprised.

"We all think Miss Dewhurst shows a preference for our friend Hartley."

"Oh, pshaw, that's all in your eye."

"No, sir-ee! You just notice for yourself," said Briggs, earnestly.

"Well, I must say I can't approve her taste."

"I fancy," answered Bobus coolly, "that your dis-

approval won't change it, at any rate. We all think she has manifested the best of taste."

"Yes, by Jiminy," spoke out McKizick. "If we were all as fine a fellow as Hartley, we would find ourself improved."

"I wish I knew how to do my duty as well as he," said Briggs.

"Dularge, Hartley's a brick," said Robbins.

"He's a gentleman in every sense of the word, and I wish him joy," said the paymaster.

Dularge recollected other occasions when he had been victimized by a combination among his messmates. "It won't do, gentlemen. This fish won't bite. You can't fool me. I'm going to put in an appearance, and pay my little addresses myself."

The party burst into a shout of hilarity, which turned into laughter so hearty, unaffected, and prolonged, that it forced a conviction of the truth through Dularge's dull pomposity. He stood reddening furiously, until McKizick got his breath enough to exclaim exhaustedly, "Well, you're the d—dest fool, Dularge!" whereupon he walked away very angry and ashamed.

A man-of-war is not designed with reference to the comfort of her rare passengers, and least of all to that of ladies. When ladies are taken from port to port, as does sometimes happen, preparations are made for them, even to building new rooms by changing the position of old bulkheads. This had not been practicable on board the Flying Fish, and, beside, Captain Merritt did not expect his guests to remain very long. He supposed, as they did, that they would leave the ship in the Havana, so he merely turned over one of his state-rooms to the ladies for a private apartment. The carpenter's mate widened the bunk so that it would hold two persons comfortably, and a cot was slung above for the third.

The cot was the source of much fun to the girls. They insisted that Mrs. Dewhurst should sleep in it, declaring it

was the highest, and therefore most honorable place, that they were afraid of it, that they were natural bed-fellows, and could not and would not be separated. Mrs. Dewhurst refused positively to have anything to do with the cot. To her it seemed impossible that she should swing about in that loose kind of a bed: she showed fear and a just indignation at the proposal. The roguish girls teased her a good deal, but at last Isabel climbed up, and was repaid for solitude by the pleasantest bed in the world. Mr. Dewhurst declared that his cot in the ward-room was better than a feather-bed at home.

The wind which had started them on their passage continued favorable, though it became very light, until the ship rounded Cape San Antonio. Then, of course, the breeze remaining in the same quarter, was dead ahead. Little cared the contented souls on board—at least, those who lived aft—for their lazy progress was the poetry of sailing. Mrs. Dewhurst felt a mother's satisfaction, now unmixed with regret, in thinking of her daughter's gladness, of her happy choice, and of the fact that Mary could be near or with her after marriage. Mr. Dewhurst watched the two couples with many a quiet chuckle, and many a bit of old-style good-natured raillery. He found a congenial companion in Captain Merritt. They talked politics, differing enough on important questions to make argument spicy, but never losing temper or omitting courtesy. They had each learned a good deal of worldly wisdom, and could even apply it to their own actions.

As the others were in no haste to reach port, so the two, captain girls, with their respective lieutenants, were entirely willing to remain at sea for an indefinite time. They lived in the present and had no wish for any better life.

The sea air, and walking exercise on deck, and happiness, together, gave the girls fine appetites, brought the pink back to Mary's cheek, the richer scarlet to Isabel's. They got prettier every day; and, with bloom and softness of

outline, returned to them their *agaceries* and coquetries, charming little nothings which count for so much with men. In them Mary was a natural adept, Isabel's disposition preventing her from going very far in that direction. She had a rare vein of humor which now cropped out in stingless witty remarks. It was a perfect delight to Garnet to hear, and supplement her saying with some dry sly thing of his own. They amused each other without effort, could not even feel bored, though they passed much time together, and of course interested each other extremely. He thought he had read his book, and he was now admiring particular parts; she was still conning hers, and was approving very heartily as she perused. In the matter of binding, to which he was by no means indifferent, he thought he had much the best bargain.

The discipline of the good old sloop went from bad to worse. It soon became a common thing to see the ladies with a circle of officers about them, all sitting on the sacred quarter-deck in chairs. Captain Merritt had somebody in to dine with his guests almost every day, and once or twice Hartley and Garnet enjoyed the pleasure of taking breakfast with him. When either of those officers had the first watch to keep, it was a certain thing that till ten o'clock a young lady would be sitting on a signal chest aft, well wrapped up, while the other young lady assisted by the other friend acted as a sort of sea-chaperon—at a suitable distance.

The girls learned to eat their dinner wherever they found themselves at dinner time. They were invited to dine in the ward-room along with Mr. and Mrs. Dewhurst, when two days out of the river; and they had such a pleasant time that afterward they easily yielded to the entreaties of the admiring officers, and made the dark apartment seem light with their gracious beauty.

But their dinner in the steerage on the seventh day out was the great public event of the passage.

The middies had, one at a time, timidly and otherwise,

managed to be introduced to the young ladies, who had treated them with such nice tact as to make the youngsters all willing to swear by them. The bashful were talked to, drawn out, and encouraged; the bold were made to feel that a reasonable distance must be kept: so the girls gained respect and regard.

The midshipmen, as usual finding out anything worth knowing in the ship, discovered the feelings of two of the watch officers, as well as its reciprocation; after which they looked upon Mary and Isabel as belonging entirely to the service, and imparted to them a large quantity of nautical knowledge which no lady should be without.

It was Young who proposed that they should have their fair shipmates in to dinner. All the others laughed at it, at first, and Larkin outrightly pooh-poohed it. However, Young stuck to it, argued that it would be impolite to let them leave the ship without attention, and dwelt upon the standing and reputation it would give their mess; till, one by one, all came around to his side except Larkin. He told them that while he agreed with Mr. Young about the pleasure of the thing, and while he very much wished the ladies' company, he found a severe practical difficulty. He was the caterer, and he knew they had precious little food fit to set before ladies. Young replied to that by saying, that Miss Mary and Miss Isabel were ladies, and they would be satisfied if assured the dinner was better than the hosts had every day, and the best to be had at the time. He, furthermore, gallantly volunteered to act as caterer himself. Larkin thereupon ceased his opposition, remarking that he would like to see them, but knew they wouldn't come, and he would not be responsible for the dinner.

Mr. Young watched sharp for a chance to hail the ladies when there was no authority in sight to advise them. They seemed to be always attended when on deck, however, and the best he could do was to speak to them when he saw them sitting aft with only Hartley and Garnet by. He was tired of watching and dodging about, thinking,

with youth's sensitiveness to ridicule, that he had already been noticed ; and he determined to depend upon the well-known kindness of the two officers. So he advanced to the group blushing, cap in hand. His modesty, or bashfulness, gained the girls' sympathy, and his original invitation, "The midshipmen wanted to know if the ladies wouldn't eat dinner with 'em in the steerage to-morrow," struck Hartley and Garnet so comically as to kill their opposition. The girls glanced, each at the proper man, and read encouragement in the amused eyes of their lieutenants ; so they accepted at once, and Mr. Young retired triumphant. They all had a good laugh at it, but could not think of receding after having committed themselves.

The next day, a few minutes before the appointed hour, the girls were on the half-deck very prettily dressed, for they had "saved their chests" through all their captivity. Mr. Larkin and Mr. Young appeared and escorted them below.

It was a trying time for all the middies, because the fame of their courageous hospitality had gone abroad, and the ship was full of fun at their expense. Larkin had thrown himself into the breach when he found that the guests were really coming, and "done his level best" to make the dinner a success. He got provisions from every mess in the ship, made flying visits to the galley, held consultations with the captain's cook and his own about new dishes, obtained glass and crockery from the ward-room mess, borrowed Cato Johnson to help wait on the table, and, in fact, performed wonders, all things considered. Still, he and all the rest were very nervous when the hour came, and almost wished they had not tried to be so sociable.

The steerage was very narrow. When the table was set, with the chairs in place, it was necessary, in order to reach one end from the other, to go out of the door at that end and clear around to the door at the other end. As they had arranged to put the young ladies at opposite diagonal corners, Mary had to go in at one door, and Isabel at the

other. This separation looked frightfully awkward at first, and made the youngsters still more nervous. There was one dreadful moment of suspense after all were seated, in which no middy dared look at another or at the guests. Then Mary's bright voice asked some pleasant question about when they would get to the Havana, and Isabel made some quiet easy remark, and the stiffness vanished magically. After that it was very pleasant for the youngsters. The visitors chatted cheerfully about things on which their hosts were informed, told them something about the glen and the pirates, asked for knowledge on matters of seamanship, displayed a charming ignorance in wondering at the ability of the midshipmen to tell the ship's position with no land in sight, and were delighted with the neat steerage, and the nice dinner. The lads were brimful of enthusiasm and pride.

And when the dinner was all done, Larkin surprised his messmates, and surpassed himself, by bringing out two bottles of champagne—real Sillery mousseux. Though they had always thought him wonderfully smart, never had they so much respected him as when he produced the wine. They admired the strength of mind which had enabled him to keep it so long, and to keep it a secret, and for him to bring it out at such a happy instant proved him to be a remarkable person. The talk flagged a good deal while the glasses were placed and the corks popped. The youngsters were too deeply concerned, to be able to keep their eyes off the bottles, as Mary and Isabel saw to their great amusement.

Larkin explained, while watching the servant, "We don't have champagne every day, ladies—only on great occasions. It was a lucky notion I took one day, when we were fitting out in New York. It occurred to me that nobody could tell what would turn up. (Steward, don't you know better'n to use a corkscrew?) So I bought those two bottles, and fetched 'em off without letting the fellows know anything about it, and stowed 'em away in

the back of my locker. If I hadn't kept it a secret, they would have worried it away from me long ago—for Saturday night, you know—and you would have had no more than the general benefit of it. (There, steward, don't try to fill it at once—wait a bit!)” There was a sweet silence for a minute.

“Gentlemen, I will give you a sentiment—please stand up. The health and happiness of our fair guests all their lives long. May they never forget the Service, and the friends in it who love them.”

Isabel answered the gallant toast from her seat, blushing and smiling, for it was funny to her, at the same time that it was manlier than she expected, and then it touched her by its sincerity and enthusiasm. “You are very kind, and you have given us a very pleasant entertainment, gentlemen. You need not fear that we shall ever forget you, for we saw how bravely you fought for us, and we can't forget that.” Then she and Mary arose and courtesied out in the grand style, and were escorted back to the cabin door. As they went in they heard three cheers from the ecstatic youngsters, who had to let out their tremendous feelings or burst. McKizick stepped in, laughing, and begged them to “moderate their transports.”

It took them the whole of ten pleasant days to reach the Havana. They found the fever already begun, and no American men-of-war in port. The captain learned that the commodore was across at Key West with the flag-ship and that another vessel of the squadron had been ordered to touch at that place preparatory to going to New York. He decided to run over at once, and urged upon Mr. Dewhurst to accompany them and ask a passage home in the returning ship. This invitation Mr. Dewhurst, in view of the fever on shore and his determination to run no more risks from pirates, was very glad to accept. Accordingly, after a stop only long enough to lay in fresh provisions, the Flying Fish carried her passengers to sea again.

The same gentle delightful airs as before retarded their

progress, so that they were over three days in sailing the ninety miles.

Those days were not all delightful. The premonition of parting crept over the young men like the warning chill before a gusty squall, from the hour in which they sailed. It reminded them of the future, and set them to thinking ahead with care. The girls, also, lost something of their gayety, and became thoughtful; but, as if governed by a common wish to put off the evil day, each of the four abstained from laying down the burden of the heart before the others.

Meantime Isabel had fast been learning her betrothed; and, what was happy for both, as she looked into his honest manly soul, she could not help loving. She had just then no object in life but to love him; and since she began by doing so unawares, and since she earnestly wished to make him happy, and felt constantly in his presence the virile strength of his passion, all the more potent with her that it was restrained, it was no wonder that she daily, hourly, grew toward him, and around him. The old figure must come in again. She was a strong vine trained to stand alone, as the vine sometimes is, and able to hold up her head in the world without aid; but when she found herself transplanted near to this sturdy tree, which offered at every instant a natural support, and one which could not cause her to respect herself the less, the true nature of the vine asserted itself. She leaned instinctively that way, sent out clinging tendrils of affection, and soon had so completely trusted herself to the tree that she could never exist again without it, except in a lowly trailing among the ashes of mourning. Her power of lonely life within herself was gone, she loved, and she found the new communion and dependence sweeter than honey dropping from the comb. Garnet saw and felt it, and his manhood stirred within him in proud gratitude to think that he would be through life the protector and support of his dear one. It was very sweet to this strong reticent man, to find himself

appealed to, looked up to, clung to, and beloved. He noted the steady change coming over Isabel, and nothing in it pleased him more than a certain shyness and timidity that he began to see.

The second evening after they had sailed he had a chair taken up for Isabel, after supper, as had become their custom. They would choose a place, apart from the others of course, and sit the evening out in conversation. Hartley and Mary could always be found not far away, engaged likewise. On this particular evening the moon, now past her full, had only a few minutes before lifted her oval disk of gold above the water when Isabel came up. The other couple followed her, and walked to their accustomed sitting place.

Garnet placed Isabel's chair where she could see the water, and sat down on the rail. For awhile they watched the line of bright glancings upon the waves, so aptly called "a floating bridge of light," by one of our own poets; and, then, commencing with short remarks, they insensibly quitted the beauties of the night to drift away into talk and thoughts of one another.

All they said in those two hours might be of interest to us—it certainly was to them—but what they said of chief importance was toward the close. They had been talking upon the art of living happily with others, upon which they perfectly agreed. Garnet spoke. "I am glad we think alike, for both of us are apt to carry our belief into practice. A difference in such an important matter might make trouble." She had no answer, and he went on slowly. "I believe we shall be happy together, Isabel. I think I can satisfy you, my darling." She trembled with the strangeness of his endearing words, for he had not used such before. "I think of my life, and I do not act rashly to wound others or to make them respect me less. You will not expect too much of me. Shall I be able to satisfy you?" Still she had no answer for him. "Yes, I know we shall be happy. I know on what I have to depend,

your truth, and charity, and goodness, dear treasure that you are !”

She answered with a lightsomeness which would not have deceived a child, in the day time when it could see her face. “Will, you praise me too much. You won’t believe all that after—after you know me better. Maybe you don’t believe it now ! Flattery, Mr. Garnet, must be offered in such a delicate insinuating manner, that the receiver never suspects, or else it must be presented so openly as to carry the impression that it is sincere. Now—”

“Isabel,” interrupted he, “you know I meant all I said. I have no motive to flatter you. You are trying to turn me off one side for some reason of your own. Well—I’m too stubborn to go.”

She had no answer ready for this direct speech, and he resumed after waiting a minute. “My darling, we are nearly at the end of the passage, and I can’t bear to think of parting from you. It will be two years and a half, or three years till we meet again. One of us may die in that time, and leave the other alone. It would be sad to think I had found my mate, and lost her before—before she was really mine. Probably we both shall live, but why should we throw away the right to call one another husband and wife for these three years. I would rather write to my dear wife, than to Miss Terrell. Had you thought about it ?”

“Yes,” she answered simply, now serious enough.

“Then you see it as I do, I know, and it all depends on one thing—can you say you love me. If you can you will consent to marry me in Key West.”

She was silent till he began to think she was not going to speak at all ; but at last she said, “Give me your arm, and walk with me awhile.” They arose and promenaded the moonlit deck, walking from the main-mast, and at each turning aft, entering the shade of the spanker.

By and by she put her right hand into his. No word was spoken, but Garnet had the answer for which he had

longed. He gave her hand a grasp which spoke his triumph and his joy. Even that grasp was symbolical. Even the happiness of this kind man was as usual at the expense of the woman's pain. He almost crushed her hand in his strong grip, but she, woman-like, did not mind it and did not complain.

When next they passed into the shadow of the sail he glanced about to see if they were unobserved, drew her toward him, and they exchanged a swift silent pressure of the lips. It was her first wife-kiss, and it seemed to awaken her. From that instant her duty, so dimly seen five minutes before, became plain enough. "How could I think of letting him go? It is impossible," she thought. After that, well did she know she loved him. She looked upon her affection as upon a new found sea, with wondering guesses at its wideness and its depth. And after that, she showed her feeling frequently and unavoidably. When he was in sight she followed him about with pure wifely eyes, beaming affection. She was offended at Mary's making some harmless little joke about Garnet's beauty, and maintained that he was a handsome man. She sought the pettiest pretext to get his company, and loved to do him trifling little services. She suddenly became more attractive, tenderer than ever before in speech and bearing, her loftly distant manner leaving her in a great degree. Her pride seemed melted away; so that when she found herself doing with eagerness the same soft little things for which she had once laughed at Mary, she laughed contentedly at herself, and told herself she didn't care, and went on doing them.

The day before they reached Key West it began to rain early in the morning and kept on raining all day—a dull, soul-deadening drizzle, without intermission. Garnet was to come on deck at six for the second dog-watch. The girls were dining in the ward-room that day, with Mr. Dewhurst, the dinner beginning as usual at five. They generally sat an hour and a half at the table, but it was

customary for the officer of the next watch to finish his meal in time to relieve the deck punctually at four bells. Garnet left the table at five minutes before the hour, and went into his room to draw on his water-proof suit, whereupon Isabel excused herself, saying, "she wanted to see aunt (!)" As they were not ceremonious in the mess, but all felt free to go and come as they liked, no one particularly noticed her going, except Mary.

When Garnet reached the half-deck on his way up, Isabel was there waiting for him, full of concern. He was not a handsome man at his best, and clad in a yellow oil-skin suit and sou'-wester he looked undeniably ugly; but he appeared to Isabel as an Apollo. She immediately beckoned him away from the hatch. "O Will, I don't like you to go out in all this rain!"

"It wouldn't hurt a baby, dear girl."

"Yes, it would. You'll take cold."

"It's a warm rain, and I shall be perfectly dry in this oil-skin."

"Are you sure?" She took his oil-soaked cotton sleeve between her thumb and finger to feel it. "It isn't thick enough, is it?"

"I have worn it several years, and have never been wet through it."

"Well—then go along with you. Oh! will you be in the cabin this evening?"

"Yes."

"Then go to your duty, sir, and don't stop wasting your time talking to me. Go let poor Mr. Briggs get his dinner."

The happy look in her eyes corresponded with her tender savagery no better than her fond tone matched it.

"Thank you, my dear," whispered Garnet, who understood her very well.

While they had agreed so well on the preceding night, Hartley and Mary had been talking, too; and so much of it was to the point that they succeeded in reaching the same

conclusions about a wedding in Key West that Garnet and Isabel had reached.

Next day the four found themselves of one mind. As usual, the men were sent forward to the assault, the two women remaining timidly behind, half-ashamed half-glad that the momentous point would soon be settled, dreading to get their wish and fearing they might not. Mr. Dewhurst received the request of the lieutenants kindly, thought it a highly natural and proper one to make, consulted his wife, spoke to the girls as a matter of form, and said, "Bless you, my children," very cheerfully.

And so they sailed onward

"Unto the bridal day, which was not long."



CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE reader once before, lending himself to my guidance, paid a flying visit of imagination to the south coast, that he might become familiar with the locality in which our friends met their adventures. Will he, after a lapse of twenty years, return? To revisit those places may prove a pleasure. If it invite retrospect and force a saddening comparison to see the lovely spots again, it will at least satisfy curiosity.

We enter the mouth of the river first, passing on either hand the black and the red buoys placed to mark the channel. On the end of the western point is a lighthouse, a slender yellow tower of stone, with the keeper's hut at its base.

We gaze around as before, and far away to the right, blinking in the horizon under the hot sun, we see the dunes of the Fisherman's Key. On this side of the islet is the same mingling of shoals, reefs, and smaller keys as before. The rocks lift their rough tops as of old amid their encir-

eling bands of foam which rise and fall on the swaying seas. The shoals mark their places by the patches of paler water above them ; the keys are mere little knolls of sand. The same sharp clean curve forms the shore of the mainland and cuts the water with its keen edge ; and the same rich foliage, here feathery, there massive, clothes the slopes of the hills, hides their asperities of line, and fills their interlying valleys. We look up the narrow stream which runs low among its hills and trees, and we see the supplement of the light-house in a picturesque little village on the western bank just above the peninsula. There is a wharf projecting into the river, and a merchant bark lies there, lazy and still. Decidedly, we will not pause to look at the hamlet : its sight jars upon our memory.

We pass on by and stop on the other side of the river, to land at the little creek. Here, too, the hand of man has been thrust in to disturb our associations. A rough wooden landing just below shows the marks of use, and has two or three fishing-boats moored by its sides. We cross it and go on up the path, now broad and clearly marked, by which Hartley fled and the seamen advanced to the attack. The trees look older, but otherwise the same.

After awhile, when we think we should have reached the glen, the way seems unfamiliar ; we look about us, go backward and forward, and are at a loss. Searching shows that the path of to-day swerves to the left of the old direction and passes by the glen at some distance. We find the natural amphitheatre at last, surrounded by a dense fringe of undergrowth extending to the very edge of the bluff. In some places plants lean over the brink, or vines hang downward into the air.

We seek the graves of Hackett and Catarina ; but either our recollection is at fault, or all trace of them has been effaced by the eroding forces of the sun and the rain.

We find the cleft defended by a thicket of bushes, woven together by interlacings of running briars. We go down the rough steps, slippery with moss and green ooze,

between the gray walls which no passing shoulder has brushed for many a day. Entering the glen, at first nothing can be seen, for the undisturbed vegetation is higher than the eye, and luxuriant with the richness of the soil: but when we reach the centre there is still a little clear space preserved by the shade of the trees. Here we can see the old gray enclosing walls, and mark the sites of the pirates' houses, whose ashes, enriching the earth, have given at each place a stronger growth to the bushes and a ranker green to their leaves. Through the foliage, on the northern side, occasional glimmers of light reach our eyes, vagrant beams, which, having found the deeply concealed brook, have been turned back by it to tell us it is still there.

The place is wild, and strange, and lonely, thus relapsed into the desolation of victorious nature. No foot of man treads here, no eyes admire the loveliness, no voice, in merry song, or careless call, or angry curse, resounds within it as of yore, echoing and reëchoing in a thousand sharp arrests against the rocky walls; by night the reddening camp-fire burns no longer to illumine the spot with its cheerful light; the smoke ascends to mark the place by day no more. Gone with man's occupation is its life. The stillness, the tangled richness of dumb vegetation, and above all, the contrast, fill us with dreariness. Our hearts sink, and gloomy images push themselves upon us, crowding into our minds with the recognition of sad change, as through an unguarded door. Let us go away!

Down the stream, then—we know the path. This is easy enough. The rains of twenty years have cut a deeper channel for the brook, a kind of sepulchral tunnel, with its thick arch of meeting, mingling foliage above, its watery floor below, and its light dimmer than it was when we last passed this way. We follow it on mechanically, old recollections thronging back upon us; we reach the end before we notice our progress, and we emerge into the sunlight at the mouth of the stream. And what a relief it is! The

same old lovely scene! No, not quite the same, for the hut is gone, and near where it stood are several little dwellings of fishermen. Their boats are lying on the beach, and their nets are spread out on the sand to dry. The men themselves lounge listlessly in hammocks under their sheds, content to smoke in quiet and to watch the beautiful oval basin. That is unchanged. Even as we saw it so long ago, still does its glassy mirror reflect the green above, drooping from the cliffs, or rounding the hill curves. The same band of clean sand beach encloses the ellipse, the slender bamboos yet wave their feathers in the air.

We pass out through the narrow entrance under the trees, whose heads have now met, whose arms are linked, through whose swaying tops we see the sky, from whose lofty limbs pendulous parasites hang over the water in rich festoons. We reach the outing, and once more our horizon is free.

Away to the east, friend, threading our devious way among the tortuous channels of the reefs. Away to El Cáyó del Pescador!

A beautiful schooner lies at anchor off the point as if waiting for us. She looks familiar—surely we know her. The graceful lines, the sheer lifting enough forward to raise her billet-head with a saucy air, the taper spars, the slender yards, the immensely projecting head-booms, the very colors of her paint—all remind us of something. Can it be *La Hembrilla*, whose fair form we saw hurled by a relentless surf upon the jagged teeth of the reef? She who crumbled away so soon, beaten into fragments by the sea, and scattered by the gale? She or her ghost, you say—an apparition like the *Flying Dutchman*, but returning in bright sunshine to the haunts of her short life. No, for hark! You can hear the voices of children.

She is the yacht "*Flying Fish*," built by the same builder, upon the same model, as was the lawless sea-beauty we knew so long ago. Her owner and sailing-master is our old time friend, Henry Hartley, out of the navy for many years, and now, attracted by an awakening of his

love for the sea, and by fond memories, revisiting the scenes of his vivid wooing. His family is with him, some of whom, in fact most of whom, are strangers to us. Everybody is on deck, for it is now only six o'clock, and the balmy breeze has dispelled the mid-day heats. The crew of eight or ten men are getting the boats ready to hoist out from their places in the waist. They are a sturdy seaman-like set, dressed in a uniform resembling that of the navy, and directed by a young officer in blue coat and brass buttons. A very ancient person sits on the hatch amidships, smoking a pipe, mending an ensign, and watching, with a contemptuous expression, the work going on before him. His round, hairless head shines like a billiard ball. Who can he be? We have seen him before, surely? He speaks in an undertone to one of the sailors near by, but we can hear. "Pilot boat fashion! Yacht sailerin'! Humph! I bet my head to a Chiny orange, that Thomas ap Catesby R. Jones"—enough; you recognize William Johnson, the quondam quartermaster. Superannuated in the service, and refusing to quit the sea to "rot in no Sailors' Snug Harbor, and have his backy stopped," he had fallen year by year through various degradations of the merchant service, till even the coasters would not ship him. By a mere accident, Hartley at last picked him up in the greatest destitution. He has now an honorary billet in the yacht while she is at sea, in which position his chief duties are, to smoke, find fault with everything, and spin his endless yarns. When the yacht is laid up, he is one of her watchmen; and many a time in the winter, he rides up to Hartley's house to puff his pig-tail in the basement, and regale the wondering Bridgets with tales of the sea. They think that Thomas ap Catesby R. Jones must have been a very great man. When Hartley's friends see the old man in the yacht, they joke about him, and wonder at such a useless piece of furniture being kept; but Hartley has made up his mind that the pensioner shall end his days in peace.

Hartley himself stands aft, a somewhat portly gentleman, active still, elegantly, yet fittingly dressed, and with a look of comfort in his cheerful face. By him is a handsome, matronly woman, whose attitude is unconsciously graceful, whose dress shows study and taste, and whose every word and look and gesture is refined. She seems at this instant without a single care, her face beaming like that of a child. Her rich blue eyes are undimmed, her hair is bright brown and plentiful, and her cheek is smooth and pink. She might be thought too girlish-looking at first glance, but her mouth has a firmness in its lines which redeems her whole face. It is Mary Dewhurst Hartley, the happy wife.

But "who are these, this bright array"—we could nearly add, "this innumerable throng?" These are the children with their two nurses. Hartley has a family. From the charming rosebud of a daughter sixteen years old down to the baby of six months, we count six heads, descending in height by regular steps; and this is not all, for there is a seventh, a sailor-son just turned nineteen, who is now in the steerage of a cruising ship in the Indian Ocean.

A woolly and gray head bobs up the companion. "Want me to go asho', sah?"—"No, Cato; nothing to eat on the key," answered Hartley. This is Cato Johnson, whom Hartley bought from "Mass' Robert down on de Eas'n Sho'," and set free. He is Hartley's general factotum at home and his steward afloat.

The officer reports the boat ready, and the little ones who have been romping about the decks, requiring watchfulness to keep them from climbing over the guard of netting, are gathered up and one by one carefully passed down. Mr. and Mrs. Hartley take their places last, and the boats set off.

When the two lieutenants returned to New York nearly three years after their marriage, each found a lusty boy baby waiting for an introduction to papa. Hartley had

pined and longed for Mary all the rest of that tedious cruise, and had greatly lost heart in the service. His bliss in reunion and the sight of his wife's happiness, with her entreaties and the precious baby, assisted by his remembrance of past delays and his repugnance to a new separation, led him to take a step, long contemplated, and which changed the whole tenor of his life. He resigned his commission. This he could well afford to do, for his pay was but a small part of his income. He looked about him for occupation, examined several things, found none congenial to his tastes and ideas, and gradually drifted into the pursuit of literature. In it he discovered his profession. He studied and wrote, and seemed content. Though he never achieved the shining distinction his friends expected from his brilliancy, still he gained a respectable name, and in certain matters was regarded as an authority. His courtesy and goodness of heart, and ability and wealth, made him beloved and respected. His house was a favorite place for the meeting of *beaux esprits*. He knew all the artists and the writers, and many a poor fellow struggling along the hard road to travel had a lift from him in cheering words of praise and hard silver dollars. The babies who came along at regular intervals were very welcome to both father and mother, who loved children and had plenty of house-room as well as heart-room for them. In the course of nature Mary had inherited her father's property, and the steady rise in real estate and rentals afterward increased their wealth and gave them more income than they cared to spend. Perhaps they were passing through life with too much ease. Perhaps in Hartley's inmost soul lay a regret for his abandoned career of hard work and usefulness ; but if so he sedulously kept it to himself.

Garnet clove to his profession. He might have given it up if he had chosen, but would not. His life's course was laid out, and no inducement of love or wealth or ease could swerve him. At this time he had reached a point of small independence by economy and careful investment, but he

might have had fifty thousand dollars and his liberty sixteen years before. He refused his friend's proffered gift, through pride.

When Hartley first withheld the avowal of the secret burying-place of the piratical hoard he little thought what a burden of doubts and scruples he was assuming. Naval education and associations had rather sharpened than blunted his sense of honor. He found himself by the death of Catarina, Hackett, and the two informers (which last he learned from a captured pirate,) the sole possessor of the secret. He never thought of appropriating the treasure to himself, in fact that would have been impossible to him. His idea of bestowing it without explanation upon Garnet seemed for a good while the correct course; but after a time the sophistry of the reasoning by which he had persuaded himself became evident to his unwilling mind. After that, his conscience was very uneasy and annoying; and he once even resolved to let the treasure lie and rot rather than soil his hands. But its ghost was not so easily to be laid. Frequently would arise in his mind thoughts of the hoard, magnified by his imagination, and sparkling in its hidden grave. At last he made a business trip to Havana, hired a conveyance overland, visited the key alone from Olozaga, and found the box at the first digging. He had it carried by two unsuspecting darkeys over to the village; there packed its contents, consisting of silver, with some gold, and a number of set jewels, into a spare trunk; and returned unmolested and quietly home. But there his troubles began again. He found himself unable to dispose of his ill-gotten goods without attracting the attention so long avoided. He was finally driven to his lawyer, in whom he confided and who helped him. The attorney could see no impropriety in the way Hartley had acquired the jewels, but thought it madness to propose giving so much money away. He assumed the whole business, appearing as the principal in disposing of the gems in Europe; and after having paid all expenses and pocketed

a handsome fee, he handed over to Hartley a balance of cash exceeding fifty thousand dollars. After all this was done came the main difficulty of all ; Garnet would not have it. Touched deeply by what he thought so rare a display of friendship, he still steadfastly refused the money. It was gall and wormwood to Hartley, not only to have it refused, but also to see that undeserved gratitude. He knew that an explanation would not help the matter, so as a last resort he set Mary to work to persuade Isabel. Mary, who was ignorant of the black source of this dammed-up stream of wealth, who was in fact ignorant of her own business matters, supposed the money came from her husband and herself, and generously urged upon Isabel to make Garnet accept it. The result was that the two women arranged a compromise, to which, after some further modification, Garnet consented. The money was left on interest in trust for Isabel in case of Garnet's death. If they both lived, their son was to have it, provided they thought him worthy ; and if Isabel were to die, judgment was to be left to Garnet alone. Hartley was glad to have the lucre out of his hands on any terms.

As the years rolled on, and the Garnet grew older, he learned to think with an ever-deepening satisfaction that his wife and son were secured against fate ; and his heart remained warmly recognizant of his old friend's goodness.

Hartley could not remember the transaction without disgust ; but time gradually blurred the whole impression and gave him ease. It was the only secret he ever had from Mary.

The boats have rounded the point and reached the beach. There is no surf to-day, and the landing is easy. The men jump out and pull the bows up on the sand, and the party disembark.

"Don't go out of hail, men," says Hartley. "Maria, you and Ellen walk around on that side with the children, but don't go far away. John, you and Isabel must keep

the little ones out of the water or the sharks may get your brother and sisters for tea. Hear that, babies ! Come, my dear.

Mrs. Hartley takes the offered arm, and they walk along the eastern beach in the long shadows of the sand mounds, talking softly of the old times. They had just been over the familiar ground resurveyed by you and me, reader ; and you must imagine how keen had been the feelings aroused, how fresh the memories evoked. Like us, they had entered alone the deserted glen ; like ours, their hearts had been oppressed. They had sought without success for the long-levelled graves of Hackett and Catarina ; and Mary had wept to think again of the sad young life so sadly closed, so utterly vanished from earth without leaving one tangible trace. They had found a pensive sorrow in the place of the expected joy ; and they were still melancholy.

They walked slowly along the beach, talking over the events of their stormy days passed in this place, smiling with regretful faces at their fervors of joy and fear, thankful for the present calm, admiring the evening sky and sea. Their hearts were very soft, and under the influence of the scene and its memories they felt again the tenderness, the inexpressible longing, of youth. They were filled with yearning aspirations for a vague good, which they could not comprehend or direct. Each was conscious the other felt the same, and their spoken communings died away.

On the mainland, long shadows of trees lay across the slopes. The valleys were dark, the western hill-sides bathed in a soft spiritual glory of golden light. The waters on the right hand lay smoothly black behind the island and far out to sea. Two rocks raised sharp points above the water near the shore ahead. They reached them, and Hartley turned with his unquestioning wife toward the centre of the key. Not far away arose three mounds in a line, north and south, the northern one being most pointed and highest. They walked to it and ascended it, pausing

upon its top to look at the lovely view. A sudden impulse seized Hartley, and he spoke.

"This is the very spot—yes—I must tell her. Mary, I have had a secret from you for twenty years." He went on to tell her about the treasure.

She made no answer when he had finished, but stood motionless, gazing away from him with her eyes full of tears. "Forgive me, Mary," said he, and she laid her arm about his neck and kissed him.

Now, friend, let your errant fancy, mate to mine, leave these old scenes and fly swifter than with wings of the sleepless sea-bird over the leagues of water, over a mysterious continent, to settle upon a frigate in the Indian Ocean. She is near the lonely islands of Amsterdam and St. Paul, as she ploughs her steady furrow to the northeast. We will not stop to observe her beauty, or her warlikeness, or to make the acquaintance of her company, not even to see young William Garnet Hartley in the steerage ; but we will pay the visit we came to make.

We enter the cabin of the captain. There he sits by the table, over which swings a lamp. He is smoking an after-supper pipe, with the old deliberation, and reading in a book with the old slow thoroughness. His face in unwatched repose shows himself.

There is the same honest, humorous look in the eyes, the same firm reticent expression about the mouth. Here and there a gray hair shines like a thread of silver among his brown locks in the lamp-light. There are lines of care, and responsibility, and thought, on his forehead, but they give nothing stern or harsh to the aspect of his good countenance. He looks older and—strange thing !—now almost handsome. Fidelity, truth, and justice, have been so long with him now, that they have become a part of him in every way, and have expressed themselves in his face, softening and refining it into a worthy mask.

He seems to grow careless, his attention relaxes, and

by and by he shuts the book and lays it down. Then he muses until his pipe is almost out. Something pleasant is in his mind—for see how tender his face has become! Was not that a beautiful smile? He glances about as if fearful of being seen, and takes from his breast a little oval case. He opens and looks at it with fond eyes. Let *us* look. It is an ivory miniature portrait of Isabel. He kisses it. Come away, friend, we have seen enough.

Captain Garnet is a truly happy man. He loves his work; he thinks his profession the finest in the world; he is intelligent, well-informed, and up with the spirit of his age; he sees the good in others, and takes pleasure in helping them in trouble; he has a high name as an officer, is everywhere respected and esteemed, and ah! by a few choice souls how he is beloved! It is a devotion they feel. But all this is almost as nothing to give him sweet thrilling pleasure, compared to the love which Isabel bears him, and which he knows and feels. He has to leave her for long absences of years, and the parting seems almost to snap his heart-strings each time, as if it had grown to its sister heart. That is bitter hard to bear. He has to stay away long, with no communication but infrequent letters, to endure all sorrows alone, to suffer apprehensions for her safety. He thinks of the baby daughter which was born and died when he was away from home, and he grieves for Isabel's lasting grief. He sometimes becomes very sad and lonely, and finds that books cannot interest a mind, or anything distract a heart, which longs for the consoling bosom of the beloved.

Yet he is happy, for he is made of heroic stuff which can endure all things for the sake of an idea; and in his bitterest moments there comes with sweet relief to his mind the remembrance that she whom he loves is waiting for him at home, ready to welcome him with an affection fresh as a bride's. If the partings are sad, the reunions seem almost too joyful for this world. Deep in his soul, hidden from men, there lies continually the steady bliss of loving

and of being loved, and this is his earthly reward. The sense of duty done goes far to pay him for separation, but the sense that he is loved is his duty-sweetener. He thinks of his lost child as an unseen link to heaven. He rejoices in the good health God gives them. He is proud of his wife's lasting beauty, and he is very proud of his son, who is full of manly promise.

Dear friend and reader, have patience with me still, for I cannot let you go till I tell you my vision—my vision of the present day—to my mind the most reconciling, spirit-assuaging sight I have ever seen.

There is a small cottage on Staten Island, perched upon high ground whence it commands a wide view. A covered veranda extends along the south side, among the diamond lattices of which there clamber vines in flower. In the turf of the sloping yard roses are blooming, and other flowers are scattered around in beds. The setting sun shines in at the western end of the porch through the leaves, and falls upon the floor in a changing play.

An old man is walking up and down this veranda, into the sunshine and back in the shade, with a slow but firm step. There is a reminder of the quarter-deck in his methodical promenade. He stands erect, and holds up his head, but he is lost in thought and is looking at nothing. His hair is as white as snow, but abundant and beautiful, making me think of a crown given for a long life's purity. His eyes are bright and clear like a young man's, and his cheek is still touched with a ruddy tinge. Seams and furrows run all over it, but there is no mean line among them all, for time has truly marked his face with what it found within. It is old Admiral Garnet. At eighty-two he is still a healthy vigorous man, and his wife at seventy-four is as hale and sprightly as himself. They have to be careful at their age to keep free from aches and pains, but they take the care and live in comfort. They can still enjoy food, and have the sense of sight so well preserved that out-

side nature still gives them pleasure. They sleep sweetly and soundly, though with the frequent awakenings of age. Sometimes in the night he will involuntarily put out his hand to feel if she is there by his side, thinking half dreamingly at first that he is away from her at sea.

These two are an enviable pair even in their far advanced years. They love each other with a devotion touching to see, and they can never be happy many hours apart. Though so old they are not weary with life, for they have used its joys without waste or cloying, without untimely weakening the powers of pleasure. Each has been so busy in faithful work that they have hardly known *ennui*. Still with all persons they can sympathize, and for "every interest they have a sense," still they watch the onward movement of the world, still do they love.

Yet, while life is pleasant, they have not any fear of death. With a perfect trust in their Saviour, they cling to his guiding hand, ready to ford unshrinkingly the shallow mist-enshrouded streamlet which lies between them and the next land whenever he shall lead them to the water's edge. Contented with the world, they have for themselves but one prayer—that they may leave it together.

But listen! a prattle of young voices mingled with older tones comes from within. The old admiral stops in his walk and turns with a pleased look. A swarm of merry little ones rush out and precipitate themselves on grandpa with various tales to tell him and requests to make. Grandma follows serenely smiling, more beautiful than ever with the loveliness of a sweet old age; and then comes Mr. Garnet, the eminent lawyer, with his dovelike little wife.

They all sit down on the steps, and the children cluster thick around their grandfather, each clamoring for a near place. He sits for awhile unmindful of the little ones, gazing off on the bay as if lost in the thought of distant days. His hand rests upon the hand of his wife, who looks into his face with tranquillity and fondest love.

Ah, friend; when you and I get old, may it be like

this ! Through such a green old age, sweetened by affection, with our dear ones near us, may we too pass trustingly into the life beyond !

Oh, William Garnet ; would that a heart strong, true and kind, like yours, beat in ten million breasts throughout our land ! Then should our country's flag, no longer flaunting idle boasts, wave with the dignity of strength in every port, on every sea. Then should we sway the world, the chosen nation of the Lord.

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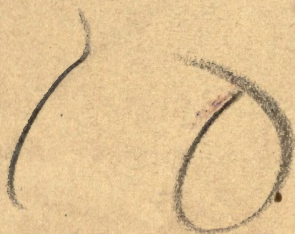
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